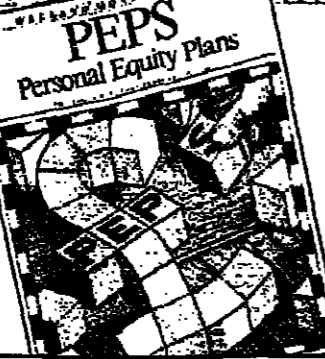


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Details and voucher
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How a starry bestseller is born
WEEKEND**Love it?**
Best Valentine gifts
WEEKEND
PAGE 7

Many feared injured in South Quay explosion after Dublin coded warning

Bomb ends IRA ceasefire

Rush-hour blast at Docklands railway station

By Andrew Pierce and Nicholas Watt

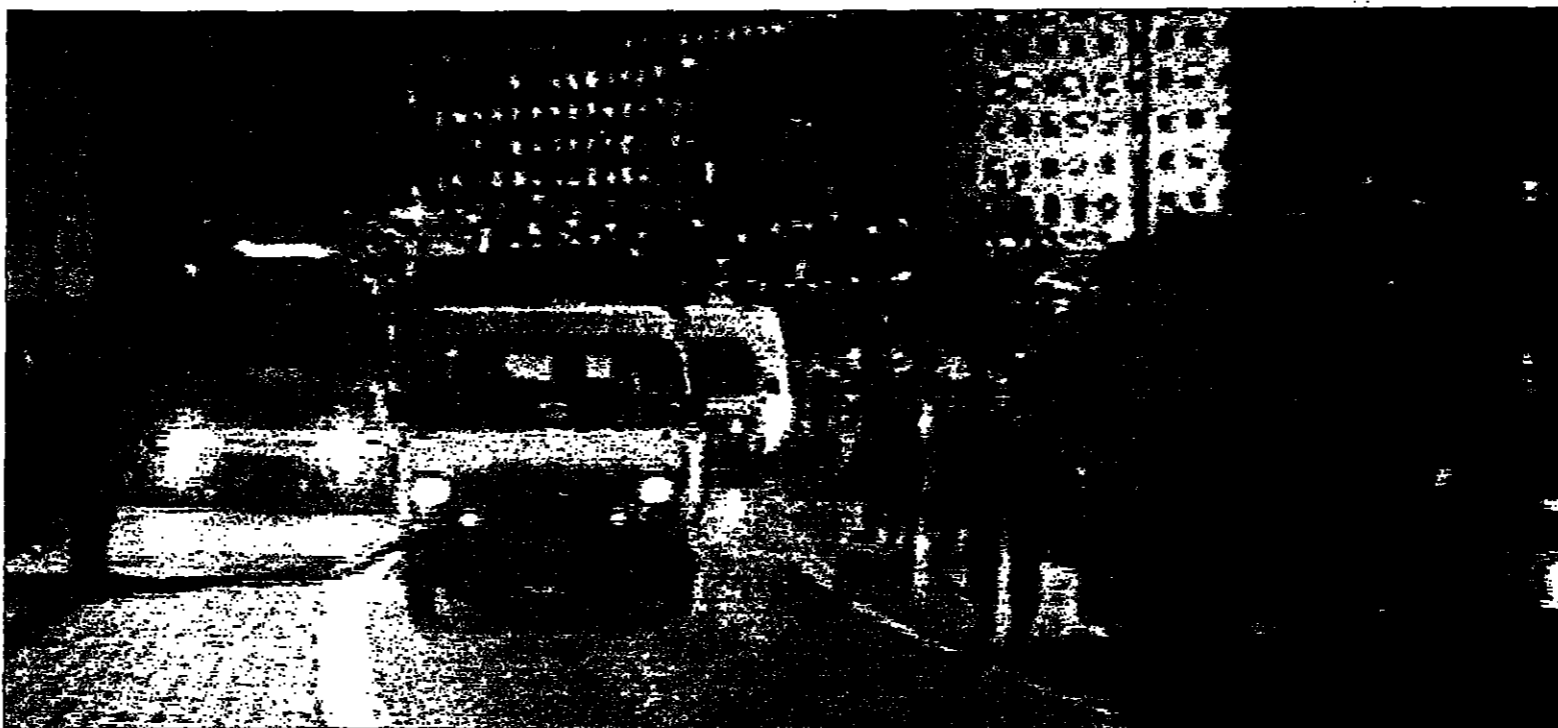
THE IRA ceasefire appeared to be in tatters last night after a huge bomb exploded on London's Isle of Dogs as thousands of office workers were making their way home.

Hospitals had to treat more than a hundred casualties, a handful of them seriously hurt, after the blast at the South Quay Docklands Light Railway station near the Canary Wharf office block tower.

A breakaway group of the IRA was believed to have been responsible for the explosion at one minute past seven.

Homes and offices were evacuated and dozens of fire engines and firefighters descended on the scene from all four corners of the capital. Residents poured into the streets as the force of the blast blew-out their windows.

RTE, the Irish national broadcasting network, said that it had received a coded statement in Dublin from the



Rescuers at the scene of the bomb blast at South Quay station last night. The station had been evacuated after a telephoned bomb threat

IRA warning that "with great reluctance" the ceasefire that began on August 31, 1994, would end at 6pm. The statement added that blame for the failure of the peace process lay "squarely with John Major and his Government". The ceasefire had presented an historic challenge, but the British Government had acted in bad faith.

Sinn Fein, however, claimed to know nothing of the statement and there was a question mark over whether the IRA had in fact called off its ceasefire or whether it was the action resulting from a split in the organisation.

The police and a national newspaper had also received telephone warnings and the South Quay station had been evacuated an hour before the blast. Police had sealed off the area and stopped all trains.

The power of the bomb shook the huge Canary Wharf

Tower and could be heard eight miles away. One worker in the block said: "There was a big thumping roar near the building. Everyone is extremely shocked and there are fire alarms going off." Another said: "The whole building shook. Dust came down from the ceiling. It was a deafening rumble."

A woman employee at the London Docklands Development Corporation said: "The windows were blown out. It felt like a hurricane blowing through."

Greta Sapwell, 24, who was sitting in the Henry Addington public house a few hundred yards from the blast, said: "I have never heard anything like it. It was incredibly loud. Three windows fell in top of us. Reaction was

surprisingly calm. We were shocked. But the rest of the pub remained in control."

Sir High Annesley, the RUC Chief Constable, gave a warning only last weekend that the IRA might resume bombing and said the mainland would be the main target. At least one active service unit has remained on the British mainland throughout the ceasefire and MI5, Special Branch and police have been monitoring IRA cells reconnoitering possible sites for attacks since the ceasefire.

Ken Maginnis, Ulster Unionist MP, said the target site was significant as the IRA's last action before the ceasefire was thwarted when explosives were seized in Heysham. "That was destined for the Isle of Dogs on that occasion," he said.

TODAY

IN BRITAIN'S FASTEST-GROWING QUALITY NEWSPAPER

Simon Jenkins on Cézanne, the blockbuster
Page 20

Rob Andrew: England, rugby and me
Page 48

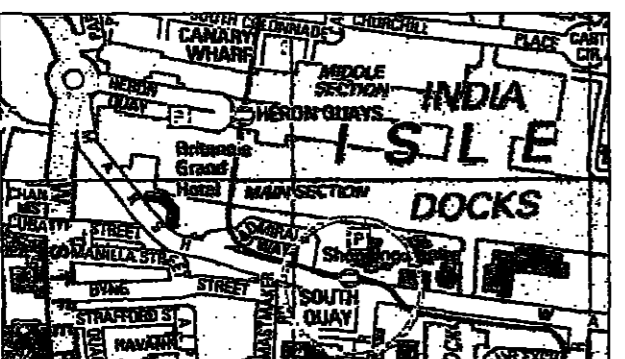
Venerie Grove meets Sir Richard Scott
Page 6

Rob Hughes on Zola Budd, back on the fast track
Page 43

● Sales of The Times have reached a new high with an average of 887,992 per day in January, according to the Audit Bureau of Circulation.

● The record circulation represents an increase of almost 9 per cent year-on-year.

● Average daily sales of The Times for the six months from August 1995 to January 1996 were 673,269, up 10.53 per cent year-on-year.



Guppy sues the Mirror

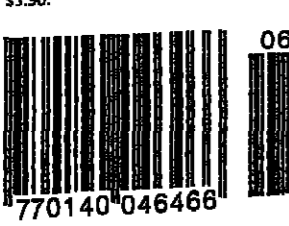
Darius Guppy, the society fraudster who was released from jail earlier this week, is suing the Mirror Group for failing to honour a £75,000 contract to buy his life story.

His solicitors issued the writ the High Court yesterday, claiming that the *Daily Mirror* had reneged on an agreement to publish his story about his chief executive, Lord Montgomery, had veiled Mr Montgomery, "considered £75,000 to be an excessive fee", the writ said. The *Daily Mirror* said last night that it would strenuously defend itself against the writ. The action is bound to reopen the controversy about media payments to convicted criminals. Mr Guppy, a declared bankrupt who was convicted of £1.8 million insurance fraud served only three years of a five-year sentence.

The Times on the Internet <http://www.the-times.co.uk>

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Australia \$20; Belgium 18; Canada \$25; Caribbean \$20; Cyprus £11.50; Denmark 18; Finland 17.50; France 14.00; Germany DM 4.50; Gibraltar 50p; Greece Dr 500; Netherlands Fl 4.50; Norway 40; Portugal 100; Spain 100; Sweden 10.50; Switzerland 10.50; Tunisia 2.00; USA \$3.50.



Hunt launched in London for rapist as car is found

By Richard Duce

A NATIONWIDE hunt for the convicted rapist Victor Farrant — wanted for the murder of his girlfriend and attempting to kill another woman — switched to London last night.

Detectives found the missing white Ford Escort Cabriolet belonging to Glenda Hoskins, the accountant suffocated in the loft of her £115,000 waterside home in Portsmouth, Hampshire, dumped in a street in Plaistow.

It emerged last night that Mrs Hoskins, 45, met Farrant while he was on home leave from an open prison, where he served the last months of a 12-year sentence for rape. Mrs Hoskins's car was last night undergoing tests at the Aldermaston forensic science laboratory. Police, who are keeping a watch on all ports and airports, are also investigating two positive sightings of Farrant in Brighton and Portsmouth on Wednesday, the day of the murder.

Last night John Greenwood, a Conservative member of the Commons home affairs select committee, condemned the decision to allow Farrant three separate periods of home leave before his release. "This calls into question what assessments were made of this man's suitability for home leave and his categorisation as someone who could be put in an open prison. These kinds of decision encourage distrust in the minds of the public about the people making the assessment for home leave."

Farrant is described by police as "extremely dangerous" and is Britain's most wanted man. He was released from jail after serving just

Five years' jail for lord in cars fraud

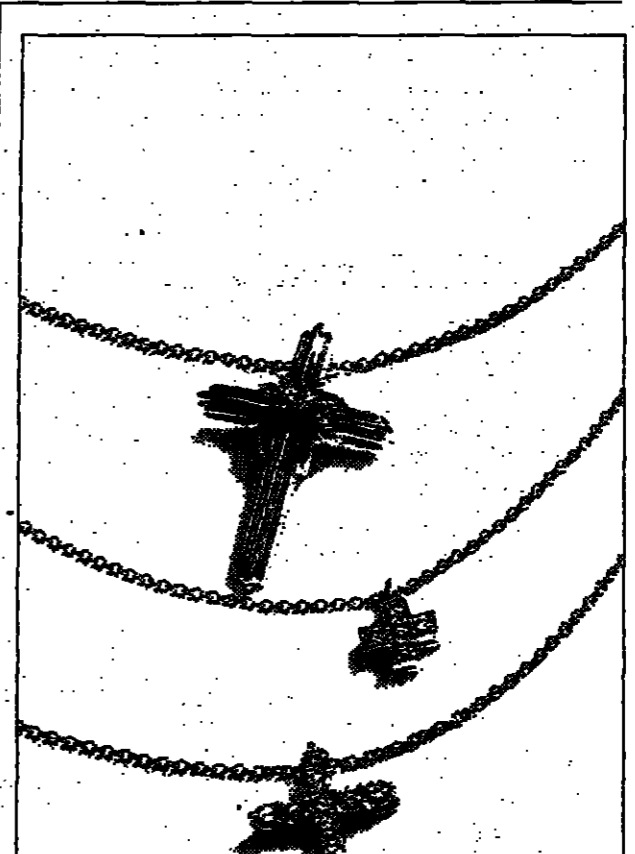
By Bill Frost

LORD BROCKET, the polo-playing friend of the Prince of Wales, was today beginning a five-year prison term after admitting a £4.5 million insurance fraud involving four classic Italian sports cars.

The disgraced peer swayed slightly in the dock at Luton Crown Court yesterday as the sentence was pronounced. Earlier, he had hung his head as Judge Daniel Rodwell told him that his conduct in compelling two employees to take part in the botched swindle was quite disgraceful.

Lord Brocket, 43, was taken from court to Bedford prison. He will be kept there while officials decide where he should serve his sentence.

Also in the dock with the Third Baron yesterday were Mark Caswell, 39, Brocket's chauffeur, and Stephen Gwyther, 40, a handyman on his



Decline and fall, page 3

Lottery pushes golf clubs to drop sex handicap

By Gillian Bowditch, Scotland Correspondent

THE National Lottery is succeeding where generations of feminists have failed in getting Britain's golf clubs to give equal rights to women members.

Two of Scotland's more traditional clubs have been told they will lose awards if they don't change their rules.

The male members of Crail Golfing Society will vote next week on breaking with a 200-year-old tradition and allowing women golfers full voting rights and a say in the running of the club at Balmorie Links on the shores of the Firth of Forth. If they do not change their constitution, the members risk losing a £442,000 award from The Scottish Sports Council's Lottery Sports Fund.

The £340-a-year Deeside Golf Club in Aberdeen is facing a similar ultimatum. To obtain a £185,000 lottery grant it will have to make radical alterations to its constitution, including granting equal rights to women and juniors.

Ivor Davies, director of the Lottery Sports Fund, said a general rule dealing with accessibility and equal opportunities is attached to all grants. The news that it will have to rewrite the rule book has come as a surprise to members of the Deeside club. Alasdair Macdonald, club secretary, said: "We only discovered the conditions when we got the acceptance. There was no

mention of them in the application form. We have not had time to consider the implications and what we will do."

At the Crail Golfing Society, where membership costs £120-a-year, there are 200 women members but they have no voting rights. Jim Horsfield, the club's secretary, said that the issue of full voting rights for women had been under consideration for three years and had not been prompted by the lottery grant.

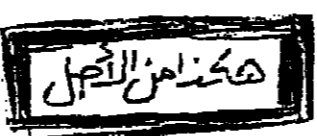
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Wheaton: top salary
Town pays its clerk £71,000

AN INQUIRY has begun into why the town clerk of a small river port is paid £71,000 a year — £3,000 more than a Cabinet minister.
Michael Wheaton, 51, who joined the council at Gooles, Humberside a decade ago as a part-time clerk on £9,469, is paid more than three times the average annual salary for his post.
The council's finance committee agreed to give him a 31 per cent rise two years ago when he was earning £54,000. The anomaly was discovered by the district auditor.
Brian Brown, chairman of the Andover NHS Trust in Hampshire, took a 10 per cent cut in earnings when the trust was faced with a £350,000 budget deficit, it was disclosed yesterday.

New university heads outstrip Oxbridge on pay

BY JOHN O'LEARY, EDUCATION EDITOR

VICE-CHANCELLORS of the former polytechnics are beating their colleagues at traditional universities into the ranks of big earners, according to the first full comparison of top pay in higher education, published yesterday.
Among the heads of conventional universities, Derek Roberts, Provost of University College London, earned the highest salary, at £129,162. But three of the four best-paid vice-chancellors were from new universities: Leeds Metropolitan, Manchester Metropolitan and Glasgow Caledonian.
Heads of medical schools, who boost their salaries with National Health Service payments, earn most, according to the survey in *The Times Higher Education Supplement*. Cyril Chandler, of the United Medical and Dental School in London, headed the pay league with £139,000 in 1994-95.
More than 40 heads of higher-education institutions broke the £100,000 barrier last year, excluding pensions but taking account of other perks. Some recorded rises of 10 per cent or more at a time when lecturers received increases of less than 3 per cent.
Professor Ken Barker's salary at De Montfort University,

Leicester, rose from £107,000 to £118,000. His deputy, Professor Mike Brown, said the rise reflected a large increase in responsibility as the university had opened new sites in Bedford and Lincoln.
The salaries, which the Government ordered to be published in the universities' annual accounts, show that earnings are not related to the standing of the institution. The director of Bath College of Higher Education, for example, earned £103,000 last year compared with the £99,000 paid to the Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University and £77,507 for his opposite number at Oxford.
Dr Peter North, Oxford's Vice-Chancellor, languished in the bottom half of the pay league, having received an increase of less than £1,000 in 1994-95. Across the city at Oxford Brookes University, Dr Clive Booth earned £13,500 more.
David Triesman, general secretary of the Association of University Teachers, said: "These are big jobs, and it is right that the salaries should be comparable with those for major jobs outside universities. But the same principle should apply to their staff, who will be hard to persuade if

they are expected to accept less."
The association will submit a claim for a substantial increase this week, as well as pressing for the establishment of a pay review body for higher education. Vice-chancellors' salaries are fixed by governors with reference to comparable rates in business and industry.
Keele paid its vice-chancellor the lowest salary among England's universities, at £70,000. Professor Brian Fender has since left to become chief executive of the Higher Education Funding Council for England. Sir William Stubbs, his counterpart at the Further Education Funding Council, is moving in the opposite direction to head the London Institute, a federation of art colleges which paid the fifth-highest salary in the sector last year.
None of the vice-chancellors, however, have the best-paid job in British higher education. That belongs to an unnamed academic at the London Business School, who earned between £150,000 and £160,000 last year. Her or (more likely) his salary was £27,000 higher than that paid to Professor George Bain, the school's principal.



Campaigners against the £4.30 toll on Skye Bridge marching to Dingwall Sheriff Court yesterday, where prosecutions began against 140 people accused of non-payment. They won the right to challenge the competency of the charges

NEWS IN BRIEF

Computer link to foil thugs

The Government yesterday unveiled a high-tech weapon to fight football hooliganism at this summer's European championship. "Photophones" will enable security staff to send pictures of suspects by computer link between police and the eight grounds where matches will be played.
Every point of entry for foreign supporters will be monitored and under immigration laws the Home Office will be able to turn back any troublemakers.
England fixtures, page 46

Accident pay-out

A man who has been in a persistent vegetative state since he fell from a dinghy during air-sea rescue training in 1987 was awarded £100,000 agreed High Court damages. At the time of the accident Lorien Bentley, 24, was on an exercise organised by Winceby House School, Bexhill on Sea, East Sussex.

Father jailed

A man who put a cigarette into the mouth of his six-week-old son to impress his friends was jailed for 28 days by Maidstone Crown Court. He admitted ill-treatment but denied that the cigarette was lit.

Child killed

A small child was killed and its mother and another child were injured when an ambulance on an emergency call to a heart attack victim crashed into their car at Dunstable, Bedfordshire.

Duke told 'sorry'

The man who tried to sell details of a phone call by the Duke of Edinburgh is to send him an apology. Neville Hawkins, of Ingoldithorpe, Norfolk, will not lose his job as a hospital maintenance worker.

Damages denied

Mervyn Bartlett of Botley, Oxfordshire, who has had a piece of needle lodged in his tongue for five years after an operation, has failed at Oxford County Court to win damages from the health authority.

Burns man dies

Richard Horrobin, 20, of Newark, Nottinghamshire, died in hospital two days after setting himself on fire because he had split up with his girlfriend. He had suffered 70 per cent burns.

WEEKEND

The room rate for the Hotel Terminus Nord, Paris (Weekend, page 18), is from Fr 985. The rate for those travelling by Eurostar at weekends is Fr 700, with breakfast.

The Isle of Wight has fewest rich

By ROBIN YOUNG

THE Isle of Wight does not share in the wealth of the South. Only 3 per cent of the islanders pay the higher tax rate — the lowest proportion in England, according to figures prepared by the Treasury.
Other southern counties at the bottom of the league table include Cornwall (3.6) and Devon (3.9). Somerset (4.5) is lower than Greater Manchester or Yorkshire, and Dorset and Norfolk both come below Cleveland (5.1). Leicestershire (4) and the West Midlands (3.6) are down in the table with Tyne and Wear (3.7).
More predictably, high earners are thicker on the ground in the home counties, with Buckinghamshire (15.9) heading the list, followed by Surrey (15.7), Berkshire (12.7), Greater London (11.5) and Hertfordshire (11.4).
The tax map derives from 1993-94 figures supplied to Gordon Prentice, Labour MP for Pendle in Lancashire (4.5), from Michael Jack, the Treasury Financial Secretary.

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Appeal court frees girl jailed for murder at 14

By Gillian Bowditch, Scotland Correspondent

THE youngest female murder convict in Scotland was freed yesterday after appeal judges ruled that she had been the victim of a miscarriage of justice.

Claire Codona was 14 when she was sentenced to be detained indefinitely last year for her part in a brutal murder in a park. Yesterday the judges ruled that there was insufficient evidence against her and that an admission made under intense police questioning had been obtained unfairly.

Miss Codona, of Glasgow, appeared bewildered after the decision was read out at the Court of Appeal in Edinburgh, but she burst into tears when she realised that she had been freed. After she had been led away to be reunited with her mother, Jayette, Miss Codona's solicitor, Gerry McClure, said: "She will certainly be going back to school. She will just be getting on with the rest of her childhood now."

She was convicted of the murder of Michael Doran after a trial at the Glasgow High Court in October. Mr Doran, 35, was stabbed and stamped to death in a park that was frequented by homosexuals. Every bone in his face and skull was fractured.

John Cairns, 18, Miss Codona's boyfriend, who pleaded not guilty, and Richard Bell, 20, and Richard Ferguson, 16, who changed their pleas to guilty during the trial, were sentenced to life imprisonment.

Colin Boyd, QC, for the prosecution, said at the trial that the gang had horned in

"like predatory animals" on three men. Two escaped but the gang set upon Mr Doran, described by his family as a quiet, gentle man. Afterwards the three youths, their clothes still drenched in blood, boasted about what they had done at a party.

The appeal court was told that Miss Codona was questioned at length by two police-women with only her father, who was an alcoholic, present. Her counsel, Gordon Jackson, QC, said Mr Codona, who had separated from his wife, had been unable to protect his daughter's interests. At the end of the questioning Miss Codona, clearly distressed, admitted kicking Mr Doran on the feet once. She later retracted her admission.

Yesterday Lord Hope, the Lord Justice-General, who was sitting with Lord Sutherland and Lord Murray, said that the police could not be criticised for cross-examining the girl, especially about her knowledge of the part played in the attack by others. But he said that questioning about her own involvement appeared to be an attempt to extract from her admissions that she was clearly not prepared to make voluntarily.

Miss Codona's home was decorated with balloons and a "Welcome Home" banner yesterday as her brothers, George, 19, and Mark, 21, awaited her return. George Codona said: "It's going to be great to have Claire back again. She should never have been locked away in the first place."



Papa and Nicole: Renault's commercial was singled out as particularly offensive

Women insulted by 'patronising' TV car adverts

By Alexandra Frean, Media Correspondent

ADVERTISING campaigns for cars are stuck in a 1950s-time warp that patronises women and ignores their growing purchasing power, according to a survey published yesterday.

Renault's commercial for its Clio small car, featuring Papa and Nicole, was singled out for criticism by researchers, who said that many women found it insulting that Nicole is portrayed as a spoilt child who drives a car bought by her indulgent father.

Some women objected to an advertisement showing a woman with her hair blowing through the sun roof of a Ford Fiesta, which was described as "your 16-valve hair-drier". They also disliked commercials that showed macho images of cars speeding or going over cliffs because they contained little practical information about safety features or prices.

Julia Dunn, media research director with the magazine company Condé Nastie which conducted the survey, said more than half the

women polled felt they were patronised by the car industry. The idea that women wanted a powder-blue coupé with a vanity mirror persisted with some manufacturers, whereas most women said that safety, service contracts and power were their criteria in choosing a car.

The survey of more than 700 women by Condé Nastie, showed that 98 per cent of respondents possess their own car. Some 84 per cent of women car owners bought their vehicle with their own money and 60 per cent made the choice completely on their own. Ten per cent of women drivers have a company car and in 1995 women bought 45 per cent of all new cars sold for private use.

Nicholas Coleridge, managing director of Condé Nastie, publishers of the up-market titles *Vogue*, *Tatler* and *Vanity Fair*, said: "Advertisers are still stuck in the mid 1950s when it comes to selling cars."

One for the road, Car 96

THE SUNDAY TIMES

Farewell to the Lords?

"Obby" the 12th Duke of St Albans, hereditary grand falconer of England, intended to take a live falcon to the 1953 coronation. When



informed that it would have to be a stuffed bird instead, he refused to attend at all.

His successor never sat in the House of Lords, not possessing a dual strawberry-leaved coronet — explaining that he didn't like dressing up...

Andrew Roberts on the House of Lords — *News Review*, *The Sunday Times* tomorrow

Chester quits radio

By Alexandra Frean

THE veteran entertainer Charlie Chester announced his retirement from radio yesterday, three months after suffering a stroke.

The BBC confirmed that Chester, 82, will not return to *Sunday Soapbox*, the Radio 2 show he has presented since 1969. He will be replaced "for the time being" by Frank Topping.

Jim Moir, controller of Radio 2, said: "After 50 years in the front line of entertainment, the time has come for Charlie to stand easy for a while and recuperate." *Stand Easy* was the name of his first radio show.

The comic, who started his career in music hall, is said to



Chester: stroke victim

be making progress in the specialist stroke unit at Nunery Fields Hospital, Canterbury, Kent, where he has been since November. He faces a prolonged recovery.

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هكامل النحل

Calm Scott keeps his head above the flood

'The wettest, most liberal judge they could find?' Sir Richard merely smiles

Sir Richard Scott likens his situation this week to the rainy summers of his boyhood in Natal, when the waters of the River Moot were in flood. You could jump in and just let the current carry you along. "I'm now in the stream, I don't even need to swim," he says. After three years of circumspect silence, he is now swept along by events.

"Angry Scott lashes back at critics": headline soundbites pre-hyping next Thursday's publication of his report are vividly at odds with Scott's equable demeanour. "By next week they will have exhausted their epithets. Perhaps there will be a stunned silence."

To see him you climb a spiral staircase, past the long room where the Scott inquiry took place, to an upper floor of the Department of Trade and Industry, a converted hotel between Buckingham Palace and Victoria Station.

His mind is quick, his intellect keen, his tone clipped, his manner mild and affable. His favourite reading is Wodehouse. He is of medium height, spry for 61, and weighed in at 13st 7lbs at the last Bar point-to-point. Let Sir Bernard Ingham huff about "dredging up the wettest, most liberal judge they could find": Sir Richard merely smiles his blue-eyed smile. As he said of such critics as Lord Howe of Aberavon and Douglas Hurd, "they were not on my Christmas card list anyway".

As a judge, he says, he is bound to be part of the Establishment. But his "outsider" status, and his individualistic pursuits, make him more interesting than that. Characteristically, he went (unnoticed) to see the Tricycle Theatre's dramatisation of the Scott inquiry, and enjoyed

seeing himself impersonated on stage.

He was born in India and raised in South Africa. At Cambridge he took a First, was a rugby Blue (wing forward) and bridge player, but not a Union debater. From there he went to the University of Chicago as a Bigelow Fellow and spent the year court-judging his New York-born Panamanian wife, who was reading Christian culture. They married in Panama that



THE VALERIE GROVE INTERVIEW

summer. He spent the last of his \$5,000 stipend on their honeymoon trip in two single cabins back to Europe via the Caribbean on a German banana-boat captained by a former U-boat commander.

"My wife wishes me to correct the fallacy that she was a flamenco dancer, as if I picked her up in some Cuban bar," he says. "But there is a substratum of fact. My mother-in-law was a professional Spanish dancer who opened a dancing school which became the Panamanian national dance institute, so my wife was always involved in dancing."

books, lives in Madrid — but Scott has no facility for languages; he failed his Afrikaans exam at school. Two of his children have converted to Islam (one daughter who did a PhD in Islamic theology at Oxford, and a son who makes furniture in Manchester) and his eldest son, a mathematician, works in computer software programming in the United States.

The attempts to define Scott as eccentric, barmy etc are very wide of the mark. The bicycle on which he has been photographed so often is merely the most "efficient, independent" way to get round London. He is not a class traitor for daring to clean out the Augean stables, but impatient of pomp or pretence; so he was neither awed by Thatcher nor cowed by Howe.

To Lord Howe's complaints that Scott failed to observe the six Salmon principles, he responds that there should be only one principle: "to devise procedures that are (a) fair and (b) efficient. I slightly bridle at the idea that there should be rules. I don't think there is any argument to support the 'unfairness' charge." He rejects the view that his inquisition was aggressive; aggression is not his style.

He decided not to allow television cameras into the inquiry — because of their intrusiveness (a correct decision, he adds in a footnote, after the O.J. Simpson trial) and the possibility of unbalanced editing.

But he says: "I do not underestimate the pressure felt by public figures of having to appear in public to explain their actions. If there was any element of unfairness in the procedure I used, it would have been found there. I don't discount the considerable



Sir Richard Scott: he is unmoved by attacks from Lord Howe and Douglas Hurd — "they were not on my Christmas card list anyway"

pressure of appearing in open hearings in front of sceptical journalists to defend what one has done as a minister or civil servant. While recognising that pressure, I think the decision to have the hearings in public whenever practicable was correct, where public figures are being questioned about the manner in which they discharge their duties, and where allegations of misdemeanour have been made, the public is entitled to see them examined."

He is a libertarian: his 1987 Sycatcher judgment ("The reasons put forward explaining the Government's inaction

are shallow and unconvincing... The facts surrounding the decision not to attempt to restrain publication are, as they emerged in the evidence given before me, very curious") was an indication of his attitude to unnecessary secrecy.

Of the leaks of his report, he says that Mark Higon, late of the Foreign Office, has identified himself as the source of one leak; "and I think I know who was responsible for the second leak last summer". After years in the Chancery division — fascinating, but

rarely dramatic — he has enjoyed his three years "working with a small, highly motivated and efficient team" among whom Prestley Baxendale, QC, quickly established himself as a star.

Sir Richard lists no gentlemen's clubs in *Who's Who*. He has no need of clubs; he prefers to go home. He ponders: should he feel slighted not to have been put up for the Garrick? "Perhaps I'm like King John" — and sometimes no one spoke to him for days and days and days. "He does list Vanderbilt Racquet Club — the tennis club where William Waldegrave plays. But

they have never bumped into each other on that sort of court."

Asked if he was a wiser man after his inquiry, he adapted F.E. Smith's reply: "I'm a better informed man." And will his five-volume, 1,800-page report be as riveting as Denning? "Nobody writes like Denning," he replies. "It would be cruel to compare us."

It was not his idea to give ministers their week-long preview of his report; he was "persuaded" to allow it. But Scott will hold his own press conference that afternoon (ready to respond to any

criticisms: "Criticisms of a judge's judgments are a fact of life") and will promptly depart for Ireland to hunt for a week. Then, he resumes his role as Vice-Chancellor of the Supreme Court, and takes on his new one as Head of Civil Justice.

John Major correctly divined that Scott was neither one of us, nor one of them: the ideal choice. After seeing him I applied a test. Would I entrust a crucial question regarding my own life to Scott's judgment and probity? Yes, I would. But being imperfect, I would feel, as Lord Howe put it, outbursts of anxiety.

Point-scoring raises Tory morale, but the fight is far from over

TORY MPs are currently chirpy and Labour members deflated. It could all turn round again after next Thursday and the publication of the Scott report. But a distinct change in the morale of the Tories has occurred over the past three weeks, thanks to a combination of the opinion polls and some strong performances by John Major at Prime Minister's Questions.

Both can, and have been, exaggerated. It is premature to talk of a turning point which alters the odds of the next election. But, as the MORI poll for *The Times* showed two weeks ago, Tory support had already begun to pick

up even before the Harriet Harman row blew up, possibly reflecting an improvement in economic confidence.

This trend has been confirmed by this week's two polls from ICM and Gallup, even though the latter probably exaggerated the underlying change since comparison was with an unusually low rating for the Tories at the beginning of January. Labour's previous big lead has narrowed a little, but is still huge by past standards.

Tory spirits have also been boosted by events in Parliament. This is currently operating on two different levels. The most familiar is the campaigning, highly parti-

san exchanges which dominate Prime Minister's Questions. The other is routine Commons business, scrutinising the executive and legislating, which carries on as before, largely out of the limelight.

A few dozen MPs have spent many hours this week debating the details of the Bills implementing the Budget tax cuts, tightening asylum and immigration rules and on housing. There has always been a tension between these two aspects of politics, but it has got much worse since the New Year as the Tories have moved to a pre-election footing. Prime Minister's Questions has been turned by the

RIDDELL ON POLITICS

Tories into an extended series of attacks on Labour.

On Thursday, only one of five questions asked by a Tory MP was even remotely about the responsibilities of the Prime Minister himself, and the exception, about a National Lottery grant to a Milton Keynes theatre, was turned by Mr Major into a Labour bash.

This is not unusual. Labour has calculated that three-quarters of Tory questions to Mr Major are about Labour, and about two-

fifths of other questions to ministers from Tory backbenchers focus on Labour rather than the Government's conduct.

It is all point-scoring politics at its worst. A Tory MP gets up and says isn't it good that the Government does not favour giving in to the unions, breaking up the United Kingdom or being hypocritical, and Mr Major agrees, giving a quote from a Labour MP to embarrass the Opposition.

However dreadful it is to endure, there is no reason why Tory MPs should not raise questions about alleged contrasts between Mr Blair's "new" Labour aspirations and continuing "old" Lab-

our practices. But, so long before an election, this has distorted Prime Minister's Questions. As Mr Blair claims, it has almost inverted the roles of government and opposition.

The Harman row allowed the Tories to go on the offensive. Armed with some sharp one-liners, Mr Major has turned in several strong performances, to the gleeful cheers of his own side, even though the raucous jousting has not always played so well on television news bulletins. These successes have done wonders for his morale and that of Tory backbenchers.

This matters since an improve-

ment in the spirits of MPs can extend in a ripple out to Conservative supporters in the country. And, under the party chairman Brian Mawhinney and his new research and communications team, Conservative Central Office has become much sharper in responding to Labour and going on the attack.

At present these are merely skirmishes, not decisive engagements. The Tories still have a long, long way to recover and they have no shortage of headaches, current and imminent, on railways and Scott.

PETER RIDDELL

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'Someone misbehaved. That happens'

Major shrugs off botched start to railway sell-off

By JONATHAN PRYNN, TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

JOHN MAJOR struggled to limit the political damage caused by the disastrous launch of rail privatisation as the search began yesterday for a fresh buyer for the Southend "misery line" franchise.

The Prime Minister insisted that the timetable for the sale of British Rail services would be unaffected by allegations of ticket fraud at the London Tilbury & Southend (LTS) commuter franchise.

"Someone misbehaved. That happens. It happens in the public sector, it happens in the private sector," Mr Major said on a school visit in his Huntingdon constituency. It has not thrown the timetable into chaos. It is tiresome that we will have to re-franchise the LTS line, but that's all.

Labour was quick to seize on the word "misbehaved" which it saw as a damaging gaffe by Mr Major. "This isn't misbehaviour. These are serious allegations of fraud involving thousands of pounds," John Prescott, Labour's deputy leader, said. Brian Wilson, the party's transport spokesman, also accused Mr Major of making light of serious allegations.

of the first three franchises to be sold because it was regarded as one of the simplest to privatise. However, rail experts said the problems at LTS were unlikely to hold up privatisation significantly as the Government was committed to selling the vast bulk of the 25 passenger franchises, 23 of which are still owned by BR, before May next year.

The management buyout for the LTS franchise was abandoned on Thursday after the two senior managers, Chris Kinchin-Smith, the managing director, and Roger Turner, the finance director, were removed from their jobs by British Rail.

An investigation into ticket sale irregularities found no evidence that they were involved, but John Welsby, the British Rail chairman, decided that senior management changes were necessary at the franchise. They will be given new jobs at BR's headquarters in London.

The sale of the LTS franchise will now start again virtually from scratch with shortlisted bidders beaten by the management buyout team invited to reapply by Roger Salmon, the rail franchise director, a process that is

likely to take several months. The shortlisted companies are Prism, a consortium of bus companies, GB Railways, a management buy-in team, and Stagecoach, the bus company that has already won the South West Trains franchise. In the Commons Labour MPs demanded an emergency statement from Sir George Young, the Transport Secretary, Donald Anderson, Labour MP for Swansea East, said: "Given the seriousness of the situation and the shambolic nature of the Government's programme, surely Sir George should be here to make a statement to the House."

David Chidgey, the Liberal Democrat's transport spokesman, said: "This proves conclusively that the government system of franchising is a total fiasco."

Roger Ford, editor of Rail Privatisation News, said: "The Government is absolutely set on privatisation and is determined to close down BR by the next election. There is some egg on faces and it will raise doubts about Roger Salmon's judgment, but in terms of the Government it is just a shell bouncing off the armour plating."



Braving the rain were, left to right, the Rev Raglan Haywill, the Rev Peter Owen-Jones, the Rev John Miller and the Right Rev John Bickersteth

Clergymen condemn 'scandalous' bypass

By ADRIAN LEE

A GROUP of clergymen joined the protest against the Newbury bypass yesterday, holding a service on the construction site. One described the £101 million project as part of the "war against creation" and another accused the Government of being two-faced.

Their stance was condemned by Church leaders in the Oxford diocese, through which the bypass will run, as an act of worship that appeared to encourage people to break the law.

The Rev Peter Owen-Jones, of St Mary's Church, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire; the Right Rev John Bickersteth,

the former Bishop of Bath and Wells; the Rev John Miller, of the United Reform Church, Reading; and the Rev Raglan Haywill, of Sussex University, braved driving rain and freezing cold to conduct the brief service as work continued around them.

Mr Owen-Jones, who later shook hands with security guards, said in his reading: "Looking around us now it does not take a lot of imagination to realise that we are at the centre of a battlefield. We have reached the point of being in a state of war against creation. This simple service is to ask God's forgiveness and to encourage us to work for peace and harmony in the

land we have inherited." A woman protester sobbed loudly as the former bishop read from Psalm 104. He added: "Yes, Lord, we are being thoroughly political, because it is politicians who decide things and you know that, because you were crucified on a trumped-up political charge."

"Please help our Government to see how feeble and two-faced they are being, like Pontius Pilate was 2,000 years ago. These things are a scandal and unworthy of the civilised country we purport to be."

A spokesman for the Oxford diocese said that local clergy did not share their views. "The service has not been

authorised by the diocese, nor has it the support of local Church leaders. They will not support an act of worship which appears to encourage the contravention of the law."

About 20 protesters attended the service. Greater numbers are expected in Newbury on Sunday for a mass walk and rally in protest at the bypass. A £1 million road scheme, held up for 10 years by a colony of rare ants, is to go ahead after a compromise was reached with conservationists. It had been feared work on the Newtown-Machynlleth road in Powys, near Commins-coch, would destroy the colony of *Formica rufa* ants.

A third of Jews shun synagogue

By RUTH GLEDHILL

ONE in three Jews in Britain no longer belongs to a synagogue and nearly half of Anglo-Jewish men under 40 have a non-Jewish partner.

A survey, due to be published next week by the Institute of Jewish Affairs and previewed in yesterday's *Jewish Chronicle*, shows that Jewish men inter-marry more than women.

It is certain to be greeted with alarm by Orthodox Jews, who make up about 40 per cent of Britain's 300,000-strong Jewish community, and the other mainstream bodies which have been struggling to combat a decline in the community caused by intermarriage and assimilation.

The survey, based on 2,000 postal questionnaires, indicates that Britain is following the American trend, where more than half of all Jews now marry non-Jews.

First wedding for Blackpool Tower

By RUTH GLEDHILL, RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

A COUPLE were married at Blackpool Tower yesterday, the latest example of how the recent Marriages Act is changing the face of British weddings.

With strong winds sweeping across the snow-covered promenade, Gaynor Sexton tied the knot with Kevin Sands, a marketing executive she met in London five years ago, in the Blackpool Tower ballroom.

They were the first to marry at the 102-year-old tower, Mr Sands, 41, said: "I always wanted to get married somewhere different. When we heard the tower had been granted its licence for weddings, I thought, 'That's the place for us.' The tower has been a meeting place for lovers. It is a magical place."

A tower spokesman said: "Many people have got engaged after meeting in the tower. It is a unique piece of seaside architecture and is

now registered for weddings." In 1985 the escapist Karl Bartoni and his bride Wendy Stokes were blessed by a vicar as they hung from a rope from the tower top.

Thanks to the 1994 Marriages Act, which allows local authorities to consider a range of premises for marriage ceremonies, couples are beginning to adopt the American trend for unusual venues. According to Ivan Allen, organiser of the first National Wedding Show, which began this week at Olympia, west London, conventional weddings are now considered "boring".

Steve Jenkins, spokesman for the Church of England, said he doubted there would be a decline in church weddings. "Bookings are up in my church," he said. "In 1992, the last year on record, half of all marriages in England took place with a religious ceremony. I doubt that will change significantly."

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16/10 5/10 35

Milder weather than Russia attracts migrants; shooting ban saves natives

Big freeze is a ray of sunshine for thousands of birds

By MICHAEL HORNSBY, COUNTRYSIDE CORRESPONDENT

THE abnormal weather is proving a lifesaver to birds: one species is seeking refuge in this country from even colder weather in its normal migration grounds, and others have been given a stay of execution from wildfowling guns because the cold is threatening their survival.

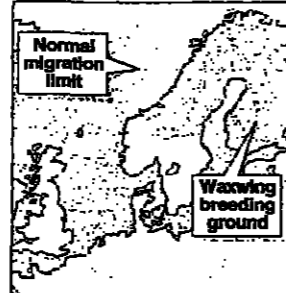
Arctic weather conditions in northern Scandinavia and Siberia that make even snow-struck Britain seem benign have led to the biggest winter invasion of bright-hued waxwings for 30 years, bird watchers said yesterday.

Chris Mead, of the British Trust for Ornithology, said: "We always see a few waxwings each year, and some hundreds every three or four years, but this winter we reckon there are at least 10,000 in flocks of up to 100. The last time so many came here was in 1965-66."

The birds began arriving around Christmas, landing

first in Scotland and then moving to the north and east of England. They have also been sighted in Wales, Ireland, Somerset, Devon, Cornwall and Gloucestershire.

Waxwings (*Bombycilla garrulus*) breed in the open glades of the pine forests of northern continental Europe and Russia and move south and west in the winter in search of food. They like berries, especially those of rowan trees and hawthorn bushes. It is thought the



waxwings could have been driven to forage further afield because of extra competition for these delicacies from other birds.

"They are about the size of a starling with a crest, a pinkish breast and a yellow band across the end of the tail", Mr Mead said. The wing feathers are tipped with red and yellow.

"In their homeland they have little to fear from human beings and are usually extremely tame and trusting."

The harsh weather means wild duck and geese will also have less cause to fear humans, at least temporarily. Shooting has been banned in England and Wales because of the threat to the birds' survival from the abnormally cold weather. The ban takes effect at 9am today for 14 days. Although the ban will be reviewed after a week, when it could be lifted if the weather improves, it will effectively



The waxwing, which is seeking refuge here in numbers unseen for 30 years

wipe out the rest of the wildfowling season. It covers the shooting of such birds as Canada and Brent geese, wild-geon, pintail, teal, mallard and shoveller.

Robin Peel, of the British Association for Shooting and Conservation, said: "Inland shooting ended on January 31, but thousands of our members will lose the last week and a bit of shooting in coastal regions. There is some dismay that the Environment Department has

chosen to impose a national ban, despite regional differences in the severity of the weather."

Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, a ban takes effect within two days after 13 days of frost have been recorded by more than half of 23 meteorological stations.

David Stroud, senior ornithologist at the joint nature conservation committee, which advises the Government, said: "The case for

regional bans has always been rejected because they would encourage disproportionate shooting pressure on birds that have taken refuge in warmer areas. The birds have low reserves of body fat anyway at this time of year and hence little to draw on if frozen lakes and gravel pits prevent them from feeding."

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Feather report, Weekend, page 15

Crede

Don't worry about hell, just try to be good

Rabbi Dr Jonathan Romain

Christians who are concerned that moral anarchy might break out now that the Church of England says hell no longer exists as a physical place of everlasting torment, can take comfort from the Jewish experience of never having that spectre in the first place.

There is a belief in a world to come, which the soul will inhabit after the death of the body, but its exact nature lies undefined. The Bible itself provides no clear picture. The references to the horrors of Gehenna (Gehenna in the New Testament) were not warnings of a netherworld, but a description of an actual site south of Jerusalem that was used by pagan cults for child sacrifice and which later became the city rubbish dump with perpetual fires trying to clear the stinking refuse.

The spirit of Samuel was called up by the Witch of Endor from Sheol, which appears to have been considered the resting place of all souls, both good and bad alike. It is not until the very end of the Hebrew Bible, (Daniel xii, 2) that reference is made to a distinction between those enjoying everlasting life and those experiencing everlasting abhorrence.

For the rabbis of the Talmud, which codified the beliefs and practices of Judaism in the fifth century, it was inconceivable that a God of love could condemn miscreants to perpetual darkness. To counterbalance Daniel, they quoted David: "I was brought low and He saved me" (Psalm 116, 6) and declared that God would never turn his back on anyone forever. If the wicked did suffer some punishment after death, it was for a maximum of 12 months.

There was another reason for this decision. The rabbis wished to place the theological emphasis firmly on this world and concentrate on immediate behaviour rather than everlasting salvation.

Hell was relegated to an occasional preaching device. Hence the story of the

rabbi who wished to see hell and was taken to room full of people wailing. They were sitting around a pot of soup, but were starving because their spoons were so long that they could not eat.

The rabbi was then shown heaven. It was exactly the same scene, people with long spoons around a pot of soup. Here, however, everyone was well-fed and happy—because they used the spoons to feed each other.

This earth-bound concept of the homiletical hell was developed by later sages into the notion that individuals create their own bliss or bitterness through their deeds and relationships. This also suggests that those in the depths of despair can change their condition through determined effort and holds out the hope that earthy heaven is around the corner for those who seek it.

The absence of a real and permanent hell did not mean that the rabbis lacked sanctions. A wrong-doer could be threatened with the *herem*—"social excommunication"—in which he was ostracised by the Jewish community and banned from the synagogue.

In a pre-modern society in which individuals were identified by the group to which they belonged, such isolation could have a devastating effect and proved an effective tool for centuries.

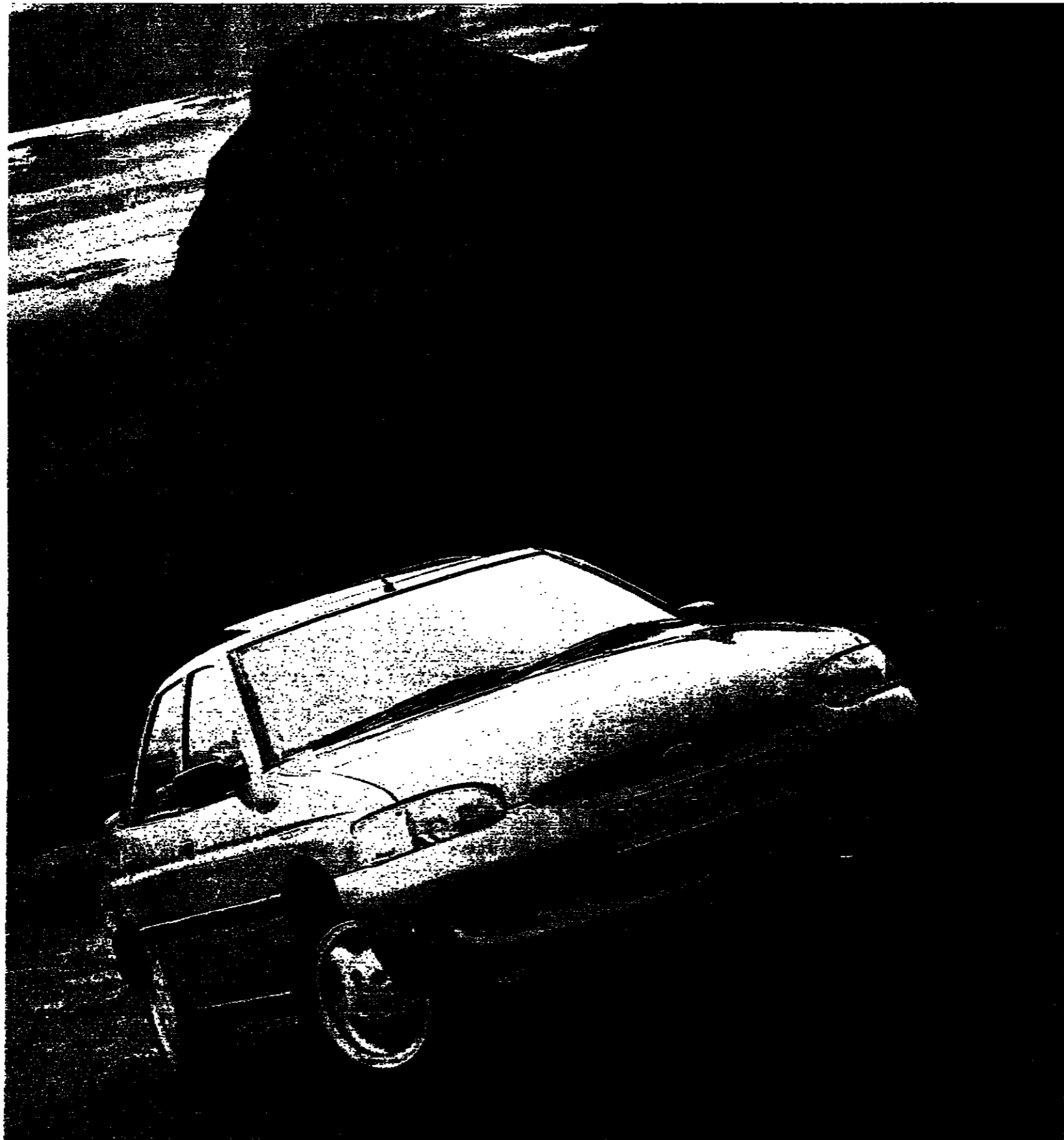
The institution of the *herem* has disappeared today, and rabbis now rely on preaching another variation of a personalised heaven and hell that which comes with age when reviewing the course of one's life and the feeling of completeness or hollowness one has.

There is no greater hell than ending life knowing one has failed it, and no greater heaven than leaving behind a legacy of love, warm memories and positive achievement.

□ Rabbi Dr Jonathan Romain is minister of Maidenhead Synagogue.

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Mandela pressed to deliver on promises

FROM R.W. JOHNSON IN JOHANNESBURG

WITH President Mandela's second anniversary in office, the euphoria of transition has given way to a feeling that it is time for him to deliver on election promises.

Mr Mandela yesterday inaugurated the new session of parliament, in which ministers are planning to present more than 230 Bills covering every aspect of the nation's life. It is far from clear, however, that they will dispel the misgivings.

Black voters want more jobs, more houses, better schools and better healthcare. Results on all these fronts are poor. The economy is growing at 3.5 per cent, but the number of jobs is static at best, thanks to lay-offs on the gold mines and in the civil services of the former homelands.

A recent poll shows that while Mr Mandela has a 77 per cent approval rating, only 58 per cent are satisfied with the Government, 53 per cent with parliament, and 41 per cent with the way democracy is working.

The Government's housing programme has been a disaster. H.F. Verwoerd remains the only South African leader to build a million houses for blacks, while the

African National Congress-led Government looks likely to build less than 25,000 in its first two years.

The Health Ministry has also achieved little, and has seen an increased emigration rate among skilled white doctors, producing a large shortfall to be met by importing Cuban doctors.

The ministry has just given away a fifth of its Aids publicity budget to finance a play by one of the ANC's favourite playwrights. Meanwhile, in rural KwaZulu more than 22 per cent of the population is now HIV positive, and hospitals are being overwhelmed. The rest of the country is moving towards similar infection levels.

It is, however, education that looks like providing the key political battleground of the session. The Government has just announced that it will take over without compensation all the previously white state schools into which white parents have put a good deal of private money. There is likely to be a further exodus towards private schools.

White parents' fears are hardly assuaged by the fact many ANC leaders have placed their children in such schools. Inland reform too, the ANC's



President Mandela greets white schoolchildren yesterday outside parliament in Cape Town, where the critical new session was inaugurated

radicalism is beginning to bite. Legislation to redistribute white-owned land by forcing farmers to sell plots to labour tenants has been pushed through parliament against strong farming opposition.

These struggles are taking place in the context of the debate over the new constitution, which is to be finalised in this session. The ANC needs a two-thirds majority in the assembly, but could hold a referendum which might pass the plans by a simple majority.

Once the constitution is passed, the ANC will no longer need its coalition partners, Inkatha and the National Party, as much as now. Only 7 per cent of ANC MPs want to continue with the Government of National Unity once that stage is reached, and are looking forward eagerly to a single party government.

Polis show, however, that a majority of voters prefer the current form of government, for it is strongly identified with the mood of reconciliation and goodwill, which is Mr Mandela's overwhelming achievement to date.

Whether this mood will survive the battles ahead is the main question looming over the new session.

Sporting model set for nation

FROM INIGO GILMORE IN CAPE TOWN

SOUTH Africans were asked by President Mandela yesterday to unite behind a "new patriotism" and join hands in creating his vision of a prosperous "winning nation".

Opening of the third democratic parliamentary session, which will see through the new constitution. Mr Mandela called on his countrymen to follow the lead of their victorious national

sports teams in uniting the nation. He said to loud applause: "All of us must take the national project of accelerated and fundamental transformation very seriously indeed. The achievement of equity, non-racialism and non-sexism constitutes the very essence of the new society."

Mr Mandela reflected on the achievements over 22 months since democratic elections — including water and electrification projects, free

health care and education — but said there was a long road ahead. The former ruling National Party praised the speech as well balanced, but the right-wing Freedom Front said that his call for new patriotism was ill-timed. Last night the former ruling National Party praised the speech as well balanced, but the right-wing Freedom Front said his call for new patriotism was ill-timed.

Lions' tour, page 48

WORLD SUMMARY

American rail crash kills three

Secaucus, New Jersey: A train crowded with morning commuters went past a stop signal and crashed into another train going in the opposite direction yesterday, killing at least three people and injuring more than 100 others.

Rescue efforts were complicated by the difficult location. Although less than five miles from New York City, it is in a marshland and the only access is by dirt road. (AP)

Spain's spies can listen in on calls

Madrid: A judge has ruled that the Spanish secret service, CesiD, has the right to listen to mobile telephone conversations (Edward Owen writes). Last year two ministers and the head of CesiD resigned in a scandal over calls taped by agents, including some involving King Juan Carlos.

Swans perish in icy Baltic

Tallinn: Thousands of Estonia swans are in danger of dying as one of the harshest winters has frozen the shallow waters of the Baltic sea where they feed. Hundreds have starved to death. The remaining 5,000 could also die if, as forecasts predict, the waters are locked in ice for weeks. (AP)

Father of the spacesuit dies

New York: Russell Colley, dubbed the father of the spacesuit, has died at 97 in Ohio. He had wanted to design clothing but was sent by his teacher to engineering classes because he was a boy. His first spacesuits were worn by astronauts in the Mercury flights of the 1960s. (AFP)

Hare brained

Canberra: A scientist unveiled the ultimate "green" lawnmower, a 20ft-long cylindrical cage made of bicycle wheels and wire nesting powered by two trained rabbits, who roll it along as they nibble grass, fertilising as they go. (Reuter)

Thai monk begs parents' forgiveness

FROM JONATHAN MILLER IN BANGKOK

THE Thai monk sentenced to death for the murder of the British backpacker, Johanne Masheder, appealed again yesterday to her parents to forgive him.

From his prison cell, Yodchart Suaphoo, 23, a drug addict, said: "I beg you to forgive me for my terrible crime." The former monk was manacled hand and foot in his cell, which he shares with five other inmates on death row in Bangkok's Singkhwang Prison.

During an unprecedented, guided tour of the jail by the Interior Ministry, Yodchart acknowledged that murdering

Masheder had brought shame on Thailand and Buddhism. "I deeply regret what I did. I deserve to die for my sins."

It's more than likely that he will. Two weeks ago, Thailand resumed executing prisoners after a nine-year hiatus. Unlike other inmates in his cell block, Yodchart will probably not benefit from a royal amnesty to coincide with the golden jubilee of King Adulyadej's reign on June 9.

"This hate him," said Wiwit Jaturapitak, the Deputy Director-General of the Corrections Department. "He hurt our country. We are ashamed." Few Thais think Yodchart, who killed Masheder for £15 in her money-belt and threw her body into a cave, should be shown mercy.

The amnesty is expected to benefit as many as 26,000 inmates, a third of the prison population. Those who will also benefit are the 3,769 foreign inmates, among whom are 72 Britons.

Sandra Gregory, of Yorkshire, who pleaded guilty to heroin trafficking three years ago, is due to be sentenced at the end of the month and may qualify for a reduced sentence. Robert Locke, arrested with her, but pleaded not guilty, may not be so lucky.

One Briton on death row is Allan Davies, 54, from Poole, Dorset. Yesterday, from his dimly lit cell he was still protesting his innocence against his sentence for heroin trafficking.

Peking gives warning to Taipei on Olympics

Hong Kong: China has threatened a strong response if Taiwan officials attend the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta (Jonathan Mirsky writes).

Wu Shaozhu, the Sports Minister who also heads the Chinese Olympic Committee, said yesterday that while China does not object to athletes from Taiwan competing in the Atlanta games, "we are against senior Taiwan officials trying to use the games for political purposes." If the

American Government allows top Taiwan officials to go to the Atlanta games, China will make a strong response.

Phil Coles, of the International Olympic Committee, said: "I'm against this sort of action." All heads of states competing in the games attend the gathering, he added. Peking's warning comes amid Chinese military pressure on Taiwan, where the first presidential elections will be held next month.

Dixons

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Yodchart: "I deserve to die for my sins"

Buchanan's conservatism has struck a chord in rural backwater made famous by Hollywood

Right builds bridges in Madison County

FROM TOM RHODES IN MADISON COUNTY, IOWA

THE yellow cornfields are bare and the rust-coloured Roseman Bridge is coated with snow, but even in winter Madison County holds a certain lustre for the incurably romantic.

They come in their droves, dreamers obsessed by the simple tale of Francesca Johnson and Robert Kincaid, a brief encounter which has brought fame and fortune to this otherwise neglected enclave.

Since Robert James Waller first published the *Bridges of Madison County* in 1992 and the release of its Hollywood offshoot last year starring Clint Eastwood and Meryl Streep, the timber-covered constructions and the hamlet of Winterset have become meccas to the cult of passion.

Today three love letters are pinned to the trelliswork of the Roseman Bridge, suggestive notes in English, French and Japanese hoping to emulate

the famous invitation to dinner which led to that fictional affair between an Iowan farmer's wife and a *National Geographic* photographer.

In April, Paul and Bridget Keerney, a separated couple from Essex, will stand on the bridge to renew their wedding vows before a local Justice of the Peace, part of a growing number of visitors who have fallen under the romantic spell of Madison County.

The attractions are perhaps

obvious. Apart from its importance in the election of the next President, a process which reaches its climax in the traditional voting caucuses on Monday, Iowa offers rolling rural farmland, pure air, clean water, the highest literacy levels in the country and, above all, the American experience free of crime and racial divide. More than 96 per cent of the population is white.

But the glare of Hollywood has muddied the tranquil

waters of Madison County and highlighted the most burning divide between the moderate and right wings of the Republican Party as it faces the first real test of the 1996 presidential campaign.

Before the emergence of Mr Waller, an unknown professor from the University of Northern Iowa, Winterset had prided itself on a more conservative cinematic image as the birthplace of Marion Robert Morrison, the American legend of True Grit himself, John Wayne.

The small white cottage on South Second Street had always served as a hideaway from the problems confronting the United States in the 1990s. Bedecked with American flags and film memorabilia, the Wayne house testified to a physically safe, demographically white and morally certain nation. A close friend of former President Reagan, Wayne had achieved a rare



Clint Eastwood and Meryl Streep in *Bridges of Madison County*. Their fictional romance has inflamed passions

stature among political leaders and remains the dominant teenage icon for both Newt Gingrich, the House Speaker, and President Clinton.

The "Duke" still hovers over the town like the ghost of a tough, but benevolent, sheriff. His face adorns the street

signs, more than 200 films are available for free viewing at the public library and a child who lives on John Wayne Drive achieves certain status among his or her peers.

More religious members of the community, however, believe his posthumous influ-

ence as Madison County's moral mentor is under threat from the more popular and less conservative doctrine espoused in the antics of Kincaid and Johnson.

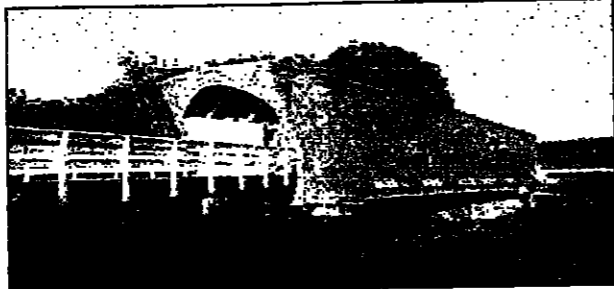
Marcia Gibson, a farmer's wife and secretary of the Word of Life Christian Centre, is one of many who have discarded the *Bridges of Madison County* in disgust. "Society does not even raise an eyebrow when it comes to infidelity. Do you think if my husband, Bill, left for the weekend, I would invite a complete stranger to my house for dinner?" she demanded. "This is meant to be a beautiful love story but it is nothing more than a tale of adultery. I don't remember seeing anything like that in a John Wayne movie. He represented morality. He was a patriot."

Increasingly, it is views such as these which are resonating among the electorate in Iowa as prospective candidates do battle for the top three places and the momentum to carry them through in the crucial New Hampshire pri-

mary in ten days' time. While no Republican has been tempted by the free publicity of a visit to Madison County, each has been eager to court the dominance of the religious Right. Already there is a sense that the evangelical vote may be consolidating behind Pat Buchanan, the radical conservative commentator.

Mr Buchanan was considered an outsider in Iowa. But he is rising steadily in the polls on a message of moral rectitude, anti-abortion and support for the little man. Surveys yesterday placed the commentator third behind an embattled Senator Robert Dole, the frontrunner, and Steve Forbes, the millionaire publisher.

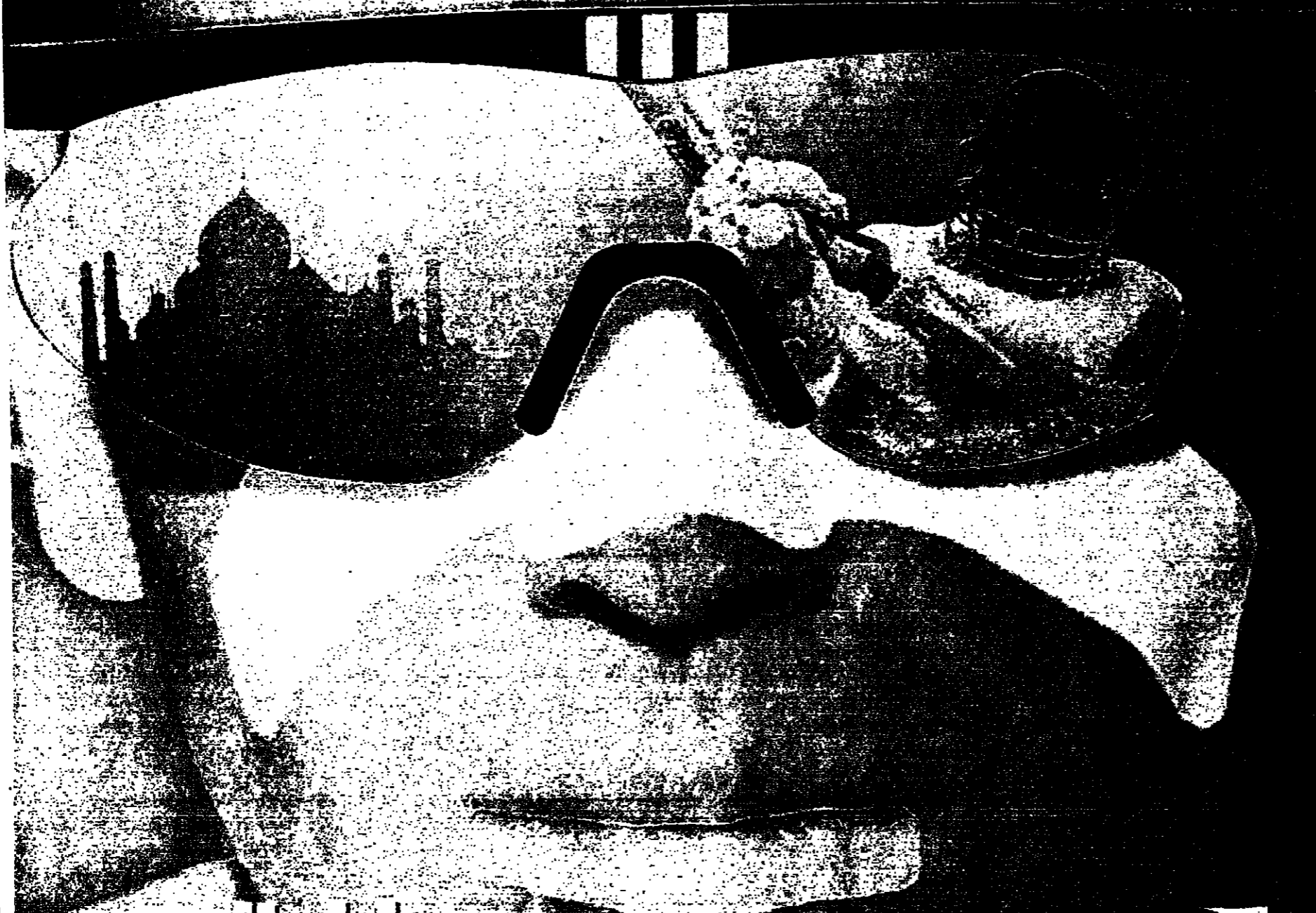
There was growing confidence in the Buchanan camp yesterday and among such staunch supporters as Bill and Marcia Gibson. "He represents the right to life and the sort of family values we had 50 years ago," said Mr Gibson. "Pat Buchanan reflects beliefs that John Wayne stood for. That's good enough for me."



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A detail from *The Girl with the Pearl*, part of the 21-work Vermeer exhibition in Washington

Freeze fails to chill ardour for Vermeer

FROM MARKIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

AS CEZANNE fever hits London, Vermeermania is reaching a climax in Washington.

The National Gallery's exhibition of 21 of the 17th century Dutch master's 35 known works moves to Europe next week. Yesterday a queue of hundreds encircled the building in freezing temperatures in a last attempt to see the display. At the front of the queue was Kevin Sudeith, a 30-year-old artist from New York, who had arrived on an overnight bus at 4.30am for the 10am opening.

Behind him were two drama students from North Carolina who had finished rehearsals at 11pm, driven 500 miles overnight and were going to have to head straight back after just two hours viewing Vermeer's work.

Allen Goldberg, a Washington estate agent, had been paid \$100 (£65) by his employers to queue for four hours for tickets. A middle-aged New Yorker, her teeth chattering in the cold, said she had lied to her boss to get the day off.

Not since a private collection of Vermeer's works was sold in Amsterdam in 1696 have so many been brought together in one place. The

exhibition was a huge hit from the moment it opened on November 12, but achieved cult status thanks to two government shutdowns caused by budget disputes.

The media seized on the closure to illustrate the impact of the row, with politicians interviewed outside the gallery's locked doors. "We became the poster child of the shutdowns," said Deborah Ziska, the gallery's spokesman. When the exhibition reopened using private funds, it became a symbol of art's triumph over politics.

Sixteen of the exhibition's 90 days were lost, plus another four due to blizzards. The gallery responded by extending opening hours and is pushing more than 400 people an hour through the seven small rooms.

"People who have worked here for decades have never experienced this kind of pressure," said Ms Ziska, who says she receives desperate calls from people claiming to have terminal illnesses or frail parents in cars outside.

By the time the exhibition closes tomorrow more than 300,000 people from all 50 states and across the world will have seen it.

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Blessing of 'Satanic' jail and cost of tour questioned

Visit by the Pope draws criticism in Venezuela

FROM DAVID ADAMS IN CARACAS

IN WHAT is turning into the most controversial stop on the Pope's four-country Latin American tour, Venezuelans are asking why the pontiff is to bless one of the most infernal jails in the region. "That place is a hell on earth," said Miguel Longa, 35, passing outside the Catia jail where the Pope was due to make a brief stop yesterday. "The mafia in there only know Satan's rules." The Pope's visit to Venezuela has aroused mixed reactions in this country of 22 million people, where an estimated 55 per cent are practising Catholics. Many, including some priests, have questioned the cost and timing of the visit. They see it as an extravagant attempt by the Government to distract public attention from an economic crisis. The Pope is due to deliver his blessing from a highway flyover, with a commanding view of the jail, situated about 200 yards away. He will do so without leaving his bullet-proof Popemobile. The tight security precautions are well understood by Venezuelans familiar with the jail's record of violence, drug abuse and squalor. Built in 1966 to house 700 men, Catia now holds 3,200 inmates. Last year, about 100 murders were reported within its walls. This week, a search of the prison turned up two pistols and 485 knives. It was conducted after a prisoner was stabbed to death during visiting hours last weekend. He was attacked by three inmates while talking to his mother. On Wednesday, four inmates were killed inside the jail in separate incidents. Critics accuse the Government of hypocrisy, saying the Pope's three-day tour has been turned into a commercial circus while attempting to cover up Caracas's urban misery with a few brushes of paint. "The Christian sense of the visit is missing," said Antonio Cova, a local commentator. Organisers defend the preparations, pointing out that the Pope is visiting Venezuela on a pastoral mission, bearing a message of social justice. But on peering around the side of the jail, it is clear that the walls hidden from the Pope's view have not received a lick of paint in years. At the prison's south entrance, José Rojas, 31, a police inspector, was overseeing the transfer of 300 of the jail's most dangerous inmates prior to the Pope's arrival. He was wearing a bullet-proof jacket, and pulled out a steel plate from his vest dented by the impact of a bullet fired from a jail window the week before. "I was standing right here," he said, gazing up at the wall, pock-marked after guards returned fire. Venezuela's prisons have long drawn criticism from international human rights organisations, which have condemned their extreme overcrowding, inadequate diet and physical abuse by guards. Corruption inside Catia is rampant, according to a former inmate, Edicto Ortega, 50, who spent 23 years in jails across the country. "It's a factory that creates an army of animals," he said. He recalled several occasions when he killed other inmates to protect his own life. "I have seen inmates take a machete and cut off someone's head and put it in a plastic bag and throw it out of the window," he said. Local human rights advocates blame the corrupt and inefficient judicial system. Two-thirds of the country's 25,000 prisoners are awaiting trial, the Justice Ministry said. The prison problems are only a symptom of the rising crime rate. Last month police reported 189 killings in Caracas, mainly in the slums on the outskirts of the city.

Leading article, page 21



One of 250,000 worshippers who attended a papal Mass during the tour

Sacked man shoots dead five Florida workmates

FROM ASSOCIATED PRESS IN FORT LAUDERDALE

A DISMISSED city employee who threatened to return to his workplace and "do things" opened fire on former co-workers yesterday, killing five and wounding a sixth before killing himself, police said. The former employee returned to an office trailer where city workers gather before dawn to prepare for the day's shifts and receive their work assignments in the Fort Lauderdale beach area. At least one person escaped and called the police. Officers found the bodies, all shot through the head, inside the trailer, which is set back from the palm-fringed Intra-coastal Waterway. The man had been dismissed months ago, an employee who just missed the shooting told a television station. "They had a drug test and he was fired because he tested positive. He made threats to come back and do things," said the worker, identified only as Doug. There was no police confirmation of those details. Two men were taken to Broward General Hospital. One died there, and the other underwent emergency surgery, a nursing supervisor said. The scene of the shooting is beneath a bridge on a narrow island between the Waterway and Fort Lauderdale Beach. It is an area frequented by luxury yachts at this time of year, and boasts swimming and marine attractions for winter visitors.

Notes reveal panic by Clinton aides over Whitewater

FROM IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON

WHITE House officials may have improperly tried to influence statements by a potential Whitewater witness, according to intriguing new documents. The White House denied the charge. The notes, seized upon by Senate Republicans, certainly convey increasing panic about awkward questions among the Clintons' inner circle shortly before a Whitewater special prosecutor was appointed two years ago. The hand-written notes were made by Mark Gearan, then White House Director of Communications, during a meeting chaired by Harold Ickes, Deputy Chief of Staff. Mr Ickes was worried about what Beverly Basset Schaffer would say. She was the former securities commissioner for Arkansas who, four months after her appointment by Bill Clinton, then state Governor, approved an unusual stock offering subtitled by Mrs Clinton, a lawyer for Madison Guaranty Savings and Loan, to keep the financial institution afloat. Madison, owned by the Clintons' Whitewater partner, subsequently collapsed at a cost to taxpayers of \$60 million (£39 million). Mrs Schaffer has consistently denied that she had been under pressure to approve Mrs Clinton's idea because she owed her job to Mr Clinton. But Mr Ickes

wanted to ensure she would continue to support the Clintons' account that they had not sought special treatment. He proposed dispatching insiders to review her account "item by item". He reportedly said: "Beverly Basset is so **** important, if we **** this up, we're done. Let's not talk it to death, let's just get it done." Yesterday Mrs Schaffer said she resisted efforts by three men with close ties to the Clinton Administration to persuade her to make public statements supporting the President and First Lady. She said she told them: "No way, I don't want to be drawn into the political response." This is the second time that documents previously demanded by the committee have belatedly turned up, only to raise new questions. Senator Alfonse D'Amato, the committee's chairman, said the notes confirmed a continuing White House pattern of directing witnesses about their recollections in the hope of avoiding problems. Mr D'Amato said he needed more time to call new witnesses, including Mr Ickes and Mr Gearan, and will ask the Senate to extend his committee's life beyond the end of February. This will ensure that Whitewater disclosures can continue deep into the election season.

Champion Kasparov takes on computer

FROM QUENTIN LETTS IN NEW YORK

A CHESS computer that can consider 50 billion positions in three minutes will take on the world chess champion Garry Kasparov, today in the first multi-game regulation match between machine and man. The IBM computer, Deep Blue, is the fastest chess-playing machine made, but experts expect Mr Kasparov to win. The champion has sometimes been compared to a computer, such is his ability to plan moves. The six-game, eight-day match in Philadelphia carries a purse of \$500,000 (£326,000), of which \$400,000 will go to the winner. Should victory be Deep Blue's, it is not clear if the money will go to IBM or to the boffins who developed the mainframe computer. The event will be Deep



Kasparov: "a defence of the whole human race"

Blue's first taste of match conditions. When preparing for the encounter, Mr Kasparov asked to see examples of the computer's previous games, only to be told, to his anger, that it had played none. The lack of a pattern of combat will make it harder for the champion to predict how Deep Blue will play. Champions have played machines before, but normally in speed or one-off games. Mr Kasparov does not have a 100 per cent record against computers, but in 1989 he played Deep Blue's predecessor, Deep Thought, and gave it a thrashing. The champion has admitted that computers can be tricky to play because one cannot intimidate them. "Psychological pressure doesn't work," he said. The customary gamesmanship should therefore be absent from the Philadelphia Convention Centre, where the match begins this afternoon. Mr Kasparov said: "This is a defence of the whole human race. Computers play such a huge role in society, but they must not cross into the area of human creativity."

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Where do you get help from HM Treasury to avoid tax? Always on Page 2 and in Weekend Money

Bonn cracks down on black-market British labourers

FROM ROGER BOYES IN BONN

THE German parliament yesterday gave the go-ahead to a law aimed at ending the kind of black-market building site work that inspired the television series *Auf Wiedersehen Pet*.

The move will hit British labourers, who have often been hired by Dutch agencies and then subcontracted to German building companies. According to German estimates, more than 40 per cent of some 80,000 Britons working on German sites have been drawing social security at home while earning about £10 an hour in Germany.

The new law which will come into force on March 1 and which will be valid until 1999, orders that European Union builders, handymen and dockers must be paid the German minimum wage as well as social security benefits. That will make them less attractive to German building companies: the German minimum wage is between £11 and £13 an hour. British workers were competitive, partly because they were as skilled as the Germans, and partly because the contractor did not have to pay the hefty social

security and insurance benefits. Taking into account social security, a German building worker cost his employer about £30 an hour. A British worker, even after the contractor pays off the Dutch agency, costs at most £20 an hour.

The new law is supposed to be enforced by the labour exchanges and the Customs service. Spot checks are already being made on building sites by German police. Employers breaking the law will be fined up to £45,000 and could be banned from bidding for public-sector contracts.

This has been a political cause of both the Government and the opposition Social Democrats, who believe that it will help to persuade German contractors to employ more Germans. Some 90,000 German building workers are expected to lose their jobs this year and the whole construction sector has been flagging badly.

But the more important story is told in the bankruptcy courts. More than 5,000 German building companies collapsed last year and more than 6,000 are expected to go in 1996. Under these circum-

stances many builders are willing to bend or break the law to stay competitive. The most basic work on sites — even those close to the German parliament which yesterday passed the law — is being carried out by Russians, Ukrainians and Bulgarians working for little more than £2 an hour.

More skilled work is being completed by EU citizens — the British, Irish and Spanish — for higher rates. It is assumed that many British workers will find a way around the new law.

Beef confiscated: A hundred kilos (220lb) of British beef has been confiscated in a swoop by health inspectors in North Rhine-Westphalia. The state, along with Rhineland Palatinate and Bavaria, has imposed a total ban on the import of British beef because of a fear of bovine spongiform encephalopathy, the so-called mad cow disease.



Marina Krivonogova and fellow cult leader Vitali Kovalchuk in court yesterday

'Goddess' jailed for apocalypse chaos in Kiev

FROM RICHARD BEESTON IN MOSCOW

THE leaders of a doomsday cult, who caused pandemonium when they called out their supporters on the streets of Kiev, the Ukrainian capital, to witness 'Armageddon', were jailed yesterday.

Bringing to an end the five-year saga of the White Brotherhood cult, Marina Krivonogova, a self-styled 'living goddess', was sentenced to four years for endangering the health of her followers and causing criminal damage. Yuri Krivonogov, her former husband and the 'chief prophet', and Vitali Kovalchuk, the 'archbishop', were jailed for seven and six years respectively. They were ordered to pay £200 for damage caused when they stormed the cathedral of St Sophia, the country's holiest church, where the apocalypse was to begin.

Krivonogova, 36, dressed in her familiar white gown and turban, sat impassively as the sentences were read out, but a dozen die-hard cult supporters, the last remaining followers in a movement which once claimed 7,000, wept hyster-

cally. 'She is not guilty, why is this happening?' said a tearful old woman as the cult leaders were led away, giving a defiant final 'blessing' to the public gallery.

The cult leaders once had a powerful following across the former Soviet Union where messengers in particular flocked to their movement. Like similar religious cults in the West, the White Brotherhood forced its members to fast, deprived them of contact with the outside world and convinced them that they would have to sacrifice their lives for the leader.

Krivonogova, a former Communist from the coal-mining town of Donetsk, predicted the end of the world at noon on November 14, 1993. This caused uproar in Kiev, where parents who had lost children to the movement flocked to find their sons and daughters. The authorities, fearing a mass suicide, scoured the city for the group's leaders, who were arrested in a scuffle with police inside St Sophia's medieval walls.



Walker: 'It has a prospect of turning bad'

Serb snub to Nato endangers accord

BY MICHAEL EVANS DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

THE Nato commander in Sarajevo issued a warning yesterday that the withdrawal of co-operation by the Bosnian Serbs in protest at the arrest of eight Serbs suspected of war crimes was looking ominous for the peace process.

Lieutenant-General Sir Michael Walker, who commands the 60,000 troops of the Nato-led Implementation Force, said: 'It does have a prospect of turning bad.'

His fears were echoed in London in a meeting between John Major and Javier Solana, the Nato Secretary-General. Foreign Office sources said that both men expressed concern at the impasse with the Serbs.

General Walker said the Serbs were wilfully breaching the Dayton agreement. General Ratko Mladic, the Bosnian Serb army commander and himself an indicted war criminal, has stopped contact with Ifor until the Serbs are released. Two senior Serb officers, General Djordje Djukic and Colonel Aleksa Krsmanovic, were among those held by Bosnian Government police.

Last night Ratko Kasagic, the Serb Prime Minister, said that despite General Mladic's orders banning contact with Ifor, talks could continue with Nato commanders. However, contact with the Muslim-Croat Federation 'cannot continue until our officers and detainees are freed'.

In Belgrade, Pavel Grachev, the Russian Defence Minister, said General Djukic and Colonel Krsmanovic were involved in peace negotiations. The arrests could render the peace talks more difficult, he said.

Photograph, page 22

Three die in blast at Grozny protest

FROM THOMAS DE WAAL IN MOSCOW

THREE people were killed yesterday in an explosion at a demonstration in the Chechen capital, Grozny, as President Yeltsin tried to find a solution to the conflict.

Viktor Chernomyrdin, the Prime Minister, was entrusted on Thursday with a mission to draw up a peace plan for Chechnya from a list of seven options. Mr Yeltsin has said that he will outline the plan next week in his home city of Yekaterinburg, where he is expected formally to declare that he is standing for a second term as president.

The explosion occurred at a rally in front of the shell of the presidential palace, the former seat of government of General Dzhokhar Dudayev, killing two civilians and one soldier and wounding seven others. The Chechens called it a 'provocation', while the Russian authorities said an explosive device was being carried by demonstrators when it went off.

Despite the blast, the rally went on. Up to 2,000 people have been protesting in the square for the past week, calling for a withdrawal of Russian forces and the resignation of the Moscow-installed government. They have thrown up barricades and clambered up the ruined palace to hang anti-Russian placards.

Resolving the Chechen conflict is a key electoral issue for Mr Yeltsin because it is the main issue over which he has lost the backing of the intelligentsia and middle classes, who used to be his strongest supporters. Since the bloody hostage crisis in the village of Pervomaiskoye last month many Russian politicians have started calling openly for a military withdrawal from the republic.

Boris Nemtsov, the Governor of Nizhny Novgorod, last week presented the President with a million signatures, calling on him to curtail the war and said that his support for Mr Yeltsin in the elections was conditional on him taking active steps to end the war.

The President has rejected these calls, but he acknowledges that the war has become a vote loser. 'If we withdraw troops, carnage will start in Chechnya,' he said in the Kremlin on Thursday. 'If we do not remove troops, there is no way of me becoming the President... We should find a compromise.'



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Where can you invest up to £10,000 tax-free

Always on Page 2 and in Weekend Money

Goddess' jab for apocalyptic chaos in Rio



MARTIN WALLER 26

The link between mosquitoes and the Misery Line

Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday

WORKING WEEK 27

An appetite to keep the customer satisfied



SPORT 43-48

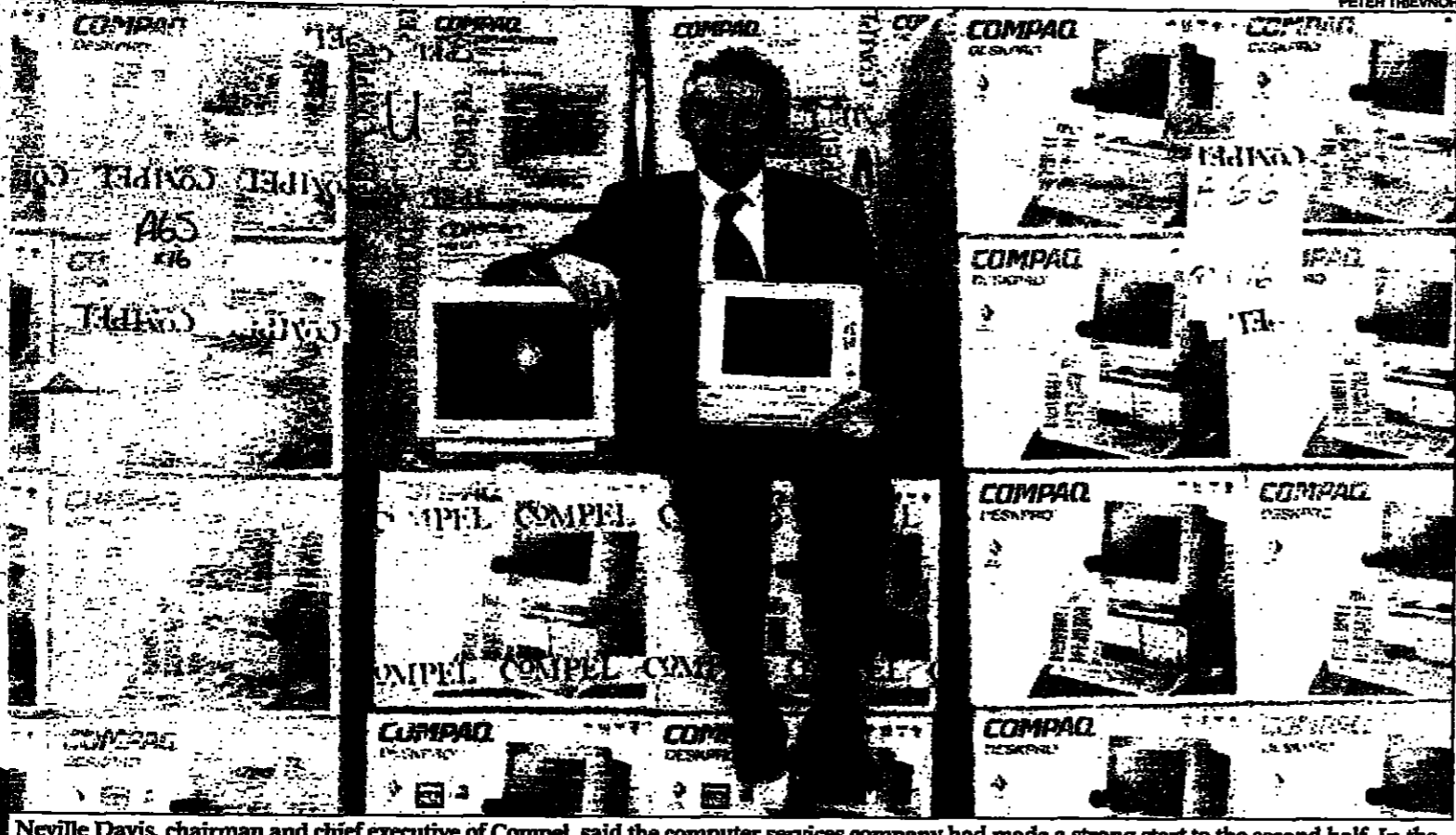
Pieterse making strides towards Olympic return

THE HIDDEN ASSETS OF DRUMMONDS Page 27

THE TIMES

BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 10 1996



Neville Davis, chairman and chief executive of Compel, said the computer services company had made a strong start to the second half. In the six months ended December 31 profits rose to £1.44 million from £1.19 million. Earnings were 6.06p (5.56p). The interim dividend is 1.54p (1.43p)

Eurotunnel considers mediation

By PATRICIA TERHAN
EUROTUNNEL directors will write to shareholders next week on the progress the company has made in refinancing negotiations with its 225 banks.

Gloomy picture for Tarmac and Wimpey

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY
TARMAC and Wimpey, two of Britain's biggest building companies, increased fears of a deepening recession in the construction industry with gloomy trading statements yesterday.



Joe Dwyer on site yesterday. Picture by Robin Mayes

BUSINESS TODAY

Table with financial data including FT-SE 100, Long Bond, 3-month Interbank, and various market indices.

Canny village investors outperform City slickers

By MARIANNE CURPHEY
THE village of Whiteparish in Wiltshire has one shop, a church and four pubs, but its amateur investment club beat the FT-SE 100 index last year by a remarkable 32 per cent.

Britannia unveils payout plan

By KAREN ZAGOR
BRITANNIA Building Society has unveiled details of its cash reward scheme, but members will have to wait to find out how much they will get.

Customers flock to switch gas supplier

MORE than 60,000 families in the South West have signed up to ditch British Gas and buy fuel from rival suppliers when a pilot project for opening up the household gas market begins later this year.

WEEKEND MONEY

31 Anne Ashworth on the perils of self-assessment

29 Elderly leaseholders win right to buy home

32 How to share financial information on the Internet

33 The British Gas demerger. Guide for shareholders

WEEKEND MONEY GUIDES PART 3 Personal Equity Plans

MERCURY ASSET MANAGEMENT Three key performance figures. Mercury Asset Management delivers performance where it counts.

Privatisation and the Law of Unintended Consequences

It is known as the Law of Unintended Consequences. Your tropical paradise is perfect in all but one respect. There are too many darned mosquitoes.

taken to create a duopoly in England and Wales because the companies had to be big enough to include and support unprofitable nuclear stations.

system, or even closed. The Law of Unintended Consequences decreed that when that plant was finally needed, during last month's cold snap, the country nearly ran out of power.



MARTIN WALLER

signal boxes and the stations. The different routes and the trains can be parcelled up among any number of operators.

the third force is a troika of utilities that own the rolling stock and rent it to the operators. It is rather as if one firm owned the power plant and another went in each day to run it.

could act as a real brake on investment in new stock. The rate you can get for that stock is subject, like anything else, to the laws of supply and demand.

Pearson to seek extra deals after \$580m buy

PEARSON, the publishing and television group, yesterday purchased HarperCollins Educational Publishing from The News Corporation for \$580 million and said it would seek additional acquisitions in the educational publishing market.

Frank Barlow, managing director of Pearson, said educational publishing was one of the company's main areas of growth.

Another departure at Laporte

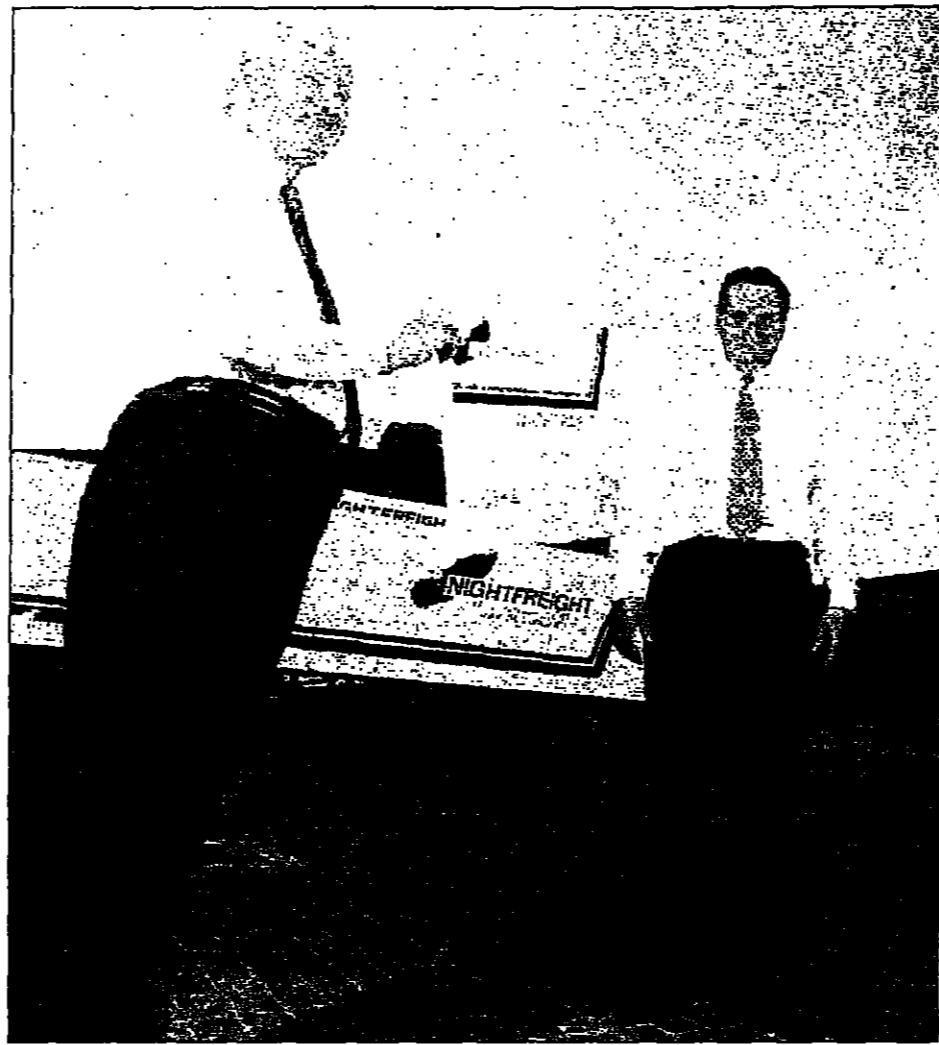
Laporte, the chemicals company, saw another departure from its top ranks as David Wilbraham, chief operating officer, resigned to join Hickson, a rival company, as chief executive.

Regal deal

Regal Hotels Group agreed yesterday to give Granada another two weeks to decide whether to sell the White Hart hotels.

Power pact

Singapore Power and National Power have signed an agreement to bid jointly for power projects in the Asia-Pacific region.



Russell Black, chief executive, left, with Jim Painter, a director, of Nightfreight, the parcels group, where pre-tax profits were £4.62 million (£4.51 million) in the year to November 30.

Executive leaves and shares slip as N&P issues warning

NURDIN & PEACOCK, the cash-and-carry company, issued a profit warning yesterday and announced the departure of Nigel Hall, finance director, saying he had "lost the confidence of the board".

By Sarah Cunningham

been edging down since October, skidding a further 10p to 148p. Pre-tax profit was £16.5 million in 1994.

Baird hit after warning on profits

By Sarah Cunningham

WILLIAM BAIRD, the clothing manufacturer, has given a warning that pre-tax profits will be below current market expectations and below those of the previous year.

City analysts immediately cut their pre-tax profit forecasts by about £3 million to £20 million for 1995 before exceptional.

For 1996, forecasts were trimmed by about the same amount to £25 million-£26 million. The company's pre-tax profit in 1994 was £25 million.

The group, which is a leading supplier to Marks & Spencer, said that exceptional charges for the restructuring of its textiles operations, which began in November, and the loss of about 600 jobs amounted to £9.8 million.

Baird expects to maintain its 1995 final dividend, "reflecting its underlying confidence in the group's future performance".

Julia Blake, an analyst with BZW, said that she was not surprised by the profit warning. She added: "It is very retrospective. Everyone has come out with a trading statement demonstrating that the trend in the second half was for lower sales and tricky margins."

The company said that it had experienced margin pressure in textiles, especially for its own-label products, following weak demand because of the unusually mild weather until late in November.

Clothing sales improved significantly in December, but that was not enough to compensate for slack business earlier in the second half of the year.

Baird's small engineering business posted a profit just above break-even as it too was hit by difficult trading conditions.

China turns to Airbus for new aircraft

By Ross Tieman, Industrial Correspondent



Li Peng, the Premier, said Chinese airlines may buy six A340s

CHINA is poised to end its year-long moratorium on buying new airliners by ordering up to 40 from Airbus Industrie, the European consortium, in a \$2 billion-plus deal.

firmed that talks are progressing well. But the consortium is expecting an early order for its smaller A320 aircraft, which it says are particularly attractive to China because of their ease of maintenance and low operating costs.

on a joint venture maintenance centre and cockpit simulator in Beijing. Airbus estimates that Chinese airlines will buy 1,320 aircraft worth \$100 billion over 20 years. As part of the sales effort, it is already sourcing parts from Chinese manufacturers, and plans to invite China to participate in developing a new super-jumbo.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Games Workshop chief raises £3m

TOM KIRBY, the chief executive of Games Workshop, has raised almost £3.35 million through the sale of 1.16 million shares in the company, which is a retailer of fantasy war games.

Mr Kirby's disposal, at 290p a share, took place as the shares rose to a record high of 305p on Thursday, valuing the business at almost £96 million.

Marr backs into brewer

MARR HOLDINGS, an operator of public houses in southern England, is reversing into United Breweries, creating a group with 277 pubs. United is paying £19.75 million for Marr, partly funded through a placing and open offer of new shares to raise £8.95 million.

US acts on music piracy

THE US yesterday charged Japan with insufficiently protecting foreign music recordings from pirate copying and sought urgent talks to settle the row. The European Commission also said it had asked Japan to extend its copyright law to grant pop stars the full 50-year protection for their recordings.

Shire valued at £106m

SHIRE Pharmaceuticals Group, which specialises in the marketing, licensing and development of prescription medicines, will be valued at £106.6 million when its shares begin trading on the stock market on Thursday.

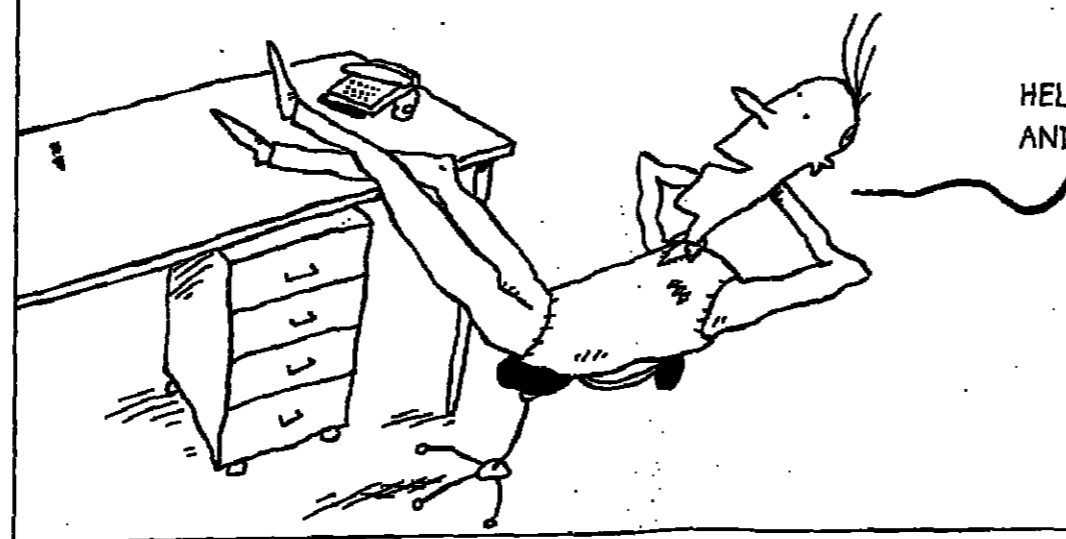
Crest Nicholson setback

CREST NICHOLSON, the housebuilder, is holding the total dividend at 2p a share after suffering a decline in profits to £6.2 million from £11.1 million in the year to October 31.

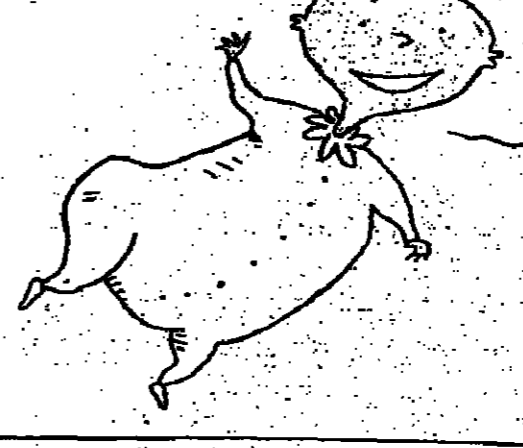
Table with exchange rates for various currencies including Bank Rate, Bank Rate, and Bank Rate.

THE SUNDAY TIMES
The two men could hardly be more different. But the Tory Lord Stevens and the Labour Lord Hollick have created Britain's first newspaper and ITV empire. Many outsiders say they won't survive the honeymoon...

The WORLD of OLIVER & CLAIRE



HELLO, I'M OLIVER AND THIS IS...



...HELLO, CLAIRE.

A WORKING WEEK FOR: JULIAN METCALFE

An appetite to keep the customer satisfied

Sarah Bagnall meets one of the founders of Pret A Manger who has no diary and gives all employees his home telephone number

Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday

HE HAS all the hall-marks of an evangelical preacher. But all Julian Metcalfe's nervous energy, and there is a lot of it, is focused on feeding the body, not the spirit. Metcalfe, 36, is half of the partnership that set up Pret A Manger, the chain of sandwich shops that has revolutionised the concept of sandwich-making — and eating.

No more limp lettuce or stinky, plastic ham nestling in gently curling bread. No more painstakingly scraping margarine off baguettes that bear an uncanny resemblance to rubber. Now, sandwich munchers have Prets, as the chain is fondly called by its 800-odd staff.

Prets is no ordinary sandwich shop. Its stores are sparkling clean with a distinctive metal decor, offering a range of high-quality sushi, salads, cakes and vamped-up sandwiches at a brisk pace. It has also won the unusual distinction for a sandwich stall of an Egon Ronay star and, in 1994, was crowned king of the sandwich by the British Sandwich Association.

But Pret's success was not won easily. Driven by pure frustration about the lack of ability to grab a quality sandwich at lunchtime, Metcalfe and Sinclair Becham, his partner, set up Prets in 1986 with a £17,000 bank loan.

To begin with, it was an abject failure. "We started in London with one shop in Victoria Street. We worked at trying to get it right for three years. It was COMPLETELY wrong for three years. It was really bad. EVERYTHING about it was bad. The concept didn't work. We couldn't get the right food. It was AWFUL," says Metcalfe, who speaks in outsized letters to emphasise a point.

But Metcalfe and Becham, 37, had a clear idea of their intentions and a fastidiousness that ultimately carried them through. "Our aim was to try to take on these wretched fast-food operators. No one really sold natural normal healthy food as a fast-food retailer. I suppose that's our fault as customers because we are impatient. That's why McDonald's and these places are so unbelievably successful. They operate marvellous businesses. Just look at the way people flock to them," he says.

The Pret mission is to emulate the fast-food chains in serving customers equally as efficiently and equally as quickly, but to offer completely naturally made products at affordable prices.

The balance between value and quality has proved a winner, and the number of stores has swollen to about 40, generating annual sales in excess of £30 million. The chain continues to expand and last week saw the opening of an outlet in Oxford — Pret's farthest-flung outpost.

Metcalfe has a rather peculiar approach to running a business. Unlike his brethren in corporate boardrooms around the country, he doesn't know what

he will be doing that morning, let alone the next day. This comes down to the basic fact that he doesn't have a diary. "My partner is completely different and very structured. But I don't have a diary personally, so I don't have any idea what I'm doing from one day to the next. I don't really need one as I don't like having lots of meetings. They're a waste of time."

This complete lack of structure gives Metcalfe immense flexibility during the week to respond immediately to ideas and events. When a semblance of an idea bubbles into his consciousness, Metcalfe doesn't need to jot it down and place it in his "to do" tray for attention at a later date. "I don't see how you get things done if you are tied down," he says.

However, Metcalfe is not left to free-wheel through the week. Lisa, his personal assistant, does keep a diary and each morning grabs him when he arrives at about 9am from his home in Battersea, south London, where he lives in a converted school with Melanie, his wife, and three children.

"Lisa comes in and says this is what you are doing today. Sign this, sign this, sign this, read this and then I'm probably half way through and I leap up and run out to do something else. I drive her mad."

However, as Lisa's diary last week of Metcalfe's movements reveals, little is planned. The sole, regular feature of his week is the Tuesday morning senior management meeting. The three-hour meeting involves a brief discussion on the group's trading but mainly focuses on the major issues challenging the business.

Of the remaining hours in the week, Metcalfe says he spends 95 per cent of his time listening to customers and listening to employees. "My week is totally driven by the employees and the customers," he says.

Given Prets is a high-volume, low-margin business, the key to its success is ensuring that the business has a loyal customer base. "You have to get your customers to come back. Thousands and thousands and thousands of them. The only way you do that is trying to satisfy them: TIME and TIME again, and the way to do that is through the price of the product, the quality of the product and the attitude of the employees who work there," says Metcalfe.

Reflecting this attitude, Metcalfe's name and number are emblazoned across all Pret bags, encouraging customers to call if they want to talk. And they do. "I speak to every customer that calls. Quite a lot of people call just to test it and then when they get through they are so surprised," he says.

And every customer who writes in gets a letter back — something that Metcalfe feels fervently about. "I spent £4,000 on something the other day through an airline. I won't say who, but it was a nightmare, but I haven't even had a letter back. That's three-and-a-half weeks ago. If someone has a problem with a £2

sandwich I write back the same day," he says. Metcalfe's openness and availability extends to the group's employees — all of them have his home telephone number. He spends large tracts of time trying to bring the best out of the "crew", as he calls the employees.

"I really do believe that coming to work is a real pain. I really do and always have. I must be a really lazy person. So you must make work challenging and rewarding," he argues. And while his attitude may not be that unusual, his approach most certainly is.

One way Prets tries to build team spirit is through a "shooting star" scheme, whereby everybody who finishes a course or gets promoted is awarded some money. But the individual is not allowed to keep the money. He or she has to give it to the people who helped to train them. Metcalfe explains: "If you have become a team manager then probably ten people went out of their way to show you how to do things. You're fine. You've got promoted. Your pay has gone up, but what about the people who helped you?"

Another example of his maverick approach was when last week he visited a shop and spotted the manager and assistant manager with their top buttons undone. Instead of leaping down their throats, he took the operational manager



Julian Metcalfe encourages customer feedback. He says: "A lot of people call just to test it and then when they get through they are so surprised"

shopping in Jermyn Street, promptly bought two £60 shirts and £40 ties and gave them to the button abusers. "At first they couldn't understand why, and then they realised and blushed. I said 'don't do it because it makes the customer think you are sloppy and you are not sloppy' and then I left. Neither of them had had their top button undone since."

Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday

He is equally as manic about quality. Last week Nelly, who plays a major part in the food side of the business, flew to Spain to check out the environment in which the chickens used by Prets live.

"It's taken us MONTHS to ensure all our eggs are properly free-range, not bullshit free-range, not a stupid marketing campaign. Our supplier's chickens DO roam around the field and are NOT debeaked and DON'T have antibiotics. The same applies to all our food. Our cakes, bread, everything. We don't put chemicals in them."

All the group's sandwiches are made on site each morning. "You can't make thousands of sandwiches in a factory in the North and then sell them the following day. You wouldn't do that at home. Imagine you, this afternoon, made a sandwich at home and then put it in the fridge and then took it out of the fridge tomorrow. It's INCONCEIVABLE. You wouldn't do that."

Metcalfe's spontaneity and dedication to quality revealed itself in a recent trip to the group's Kensington store. "We sell a brand of crisps that I was deeply unhappy about. I was so fed up seeing these huge trolleys of crisps that I ended up wheeling one out of the shop, down the arcade, through Boots and out on to the pavement and just got rid of them. I couldn't BEAR to see them any more."

Prets appears to have struck on the right recipe for success, but Metcalfe believes that to stay successful Prets must offer high quality and good service at the right price, while keeping a close check on the competition and taking the appropriate action.

"Looking at what other people are doing is very important. The trouble is that everyone does this, but the fact of the matter is what they DO about it? The great thing is that Pret accepts that action is required. A lot of people seem to monitor their own failure and do nothing about it. It's EXTRAORDINARY."

A lot of people monitor their failure and do nothing about it

A bank where social history is keenly taken into account

Joanna Pitman unearths treasures among the archives at Drummonds

Prime party venues have been snapped up all over Britain four years in advance for New Year's Eve 1999 to celebrate the millennium. Messrs Drummond, the bankers, who were bought by Royal Bank of Scotland in 1924, will no doubt already be working on the menu to rival the 1900 annual partnership dinner at its Charing Cross premises on the eve of the last turn of the century.

A colourful collection of decorative menu cards forms just a part of the rich archives of the bank, a collection of documents, records, letters, scrolls, pictures and ledgers which provides an unusual social history of London going back more than 250 years.

Andrew Drummond was 29 when he opened his first banking ledger in 1777 as a young Scottish goldsmith recently moved south from Edinburgh to set up shop "at the sign of the golden eagle" in Charing Cross, an area where Scots had settled since Elizabethan times.

Scottish names predominate in the early accounts but as a tenant of Northumberland House, the last of the riverside palaces on the Strand, Drummond and his fledgling business benefited from the lavish entertainments laid on by the Duke of Northumberland, to which ministers and members of the nobility were invited.

But he also had early connections with men of the arts and craftsmen who congregated in the 18th century around St Martin's Lane and

the Strand. James Gibbs, architect of the new St Martin-in-the-Fields of which Drummond was a warden, opened an account, as did Alexander Pope, the poet, and John Zoffany, the painter. The last years of Drummond's life were prosperous ones. Britain's economic stability at home and colonial expansion abroad meant London had become Europe's largest city. New clients included Sir William Chambers and Henry Holland, the architects, Lancelot Capability Brown, the landscape gardener, and Thomas Gainsborough, the painter.

When Drummond died at the age of 81 in 1769, a contemporary remembered his boast that "I have done great things, and have almost everything I could desire. My son is married into a noble family, and I have planted a colony of Drummonds round Charing Cross which appears to thrive."

The business was indeed thriving, so much so that the bank's premises on the west side of Whitehall, bought in 1760, were improved with ceilings and mantelpieces designed by Robert and James Adam, the fashionable architects of the day. Despite near-bankruptcy, the firm again flourished and by 1775 there were nine dukes and 82 peers among the 2,850 account-holders as well as industrialists and entrepreneurs, including Josiah Wedgwood and Isambard Kingdom Brunel.

But the bank was most proud of its royal patronage and letters in the archive show the extent of it. Beginning in 1764 when Samuel Martin opened an account as treasurer to the widowed Princess of Wales. The Duke of Gloucester began to bank there in 1775 and in 1784 George III, "chasing to deal with a Gentleman rather than addressing myself through others to the Common sort of moneyed Men", approached Henry Drummond for £24,000.

In the 19th century, customers included several prime ministers, Sir John Fredrick Herschel, the astronomer, and Sir Humphry Davy, the chemist. Today Drummonds keeps its history books open and maintains a number of accounts that date back to the 18th century. Social historians will continue to delight for many years in the riches of its archives.

Some of the rare menu cards housed at Drummonds

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STOCK MARKET

MICHAEL CLARK

Investors turn nervous as profit warnings multiply

ANOTHER spate of profit warnings and downgrades weighed heavily on investors with share prices dipping below 3,700 at one stage.



David Sims saw Nurdin & Peacock shares slip 10p

Nurdin & Peacock, the cash and carry operator, fell 10p to 148p after warning that profits for the year just ended will fall short of expectations.

A profit warning also sent William Baird tumbling 13p to 108p, after touching 159p. The clothing group said pre-tax profits, achieved before restructuring costs of almost £10 million, will fall short of last year's £25.1 million, although the total dividend would be maintained at 9.5p.

The mild weather was blamed for the setback, which had put margins under pressure. Improved clothing sales during December had failed to offset the earlier problems.

however, no disguising what has been a difficult time for investors, with the index falling 65-points on the week.

Once again turnover fell a lot to be desired and by the close of business a total of 806 million shares had changed hands.

Profit-taking left MAI 13p lower at 435p in the wake of this week's proposed £2.9 billion takeover by United News & Media, publisher of the Daily Express.

and the start of the fifth consecutive record-breaking run on the Wall Street market to end the week in positive territory. The index had opened 12-points higher reflecting New York's overnight performance before dipping back below 3,700 on renewed political worries and uncertainty about the timing of the next cut in German interest rates.

Corporation, parent company of The Times. Brokers said it was a step in the right direction for Pearson, but the shares finished 7p lower at 683p, after briefly touching 67p. Pearson share price has been scaling new highs recently on suggestions that it is a potential bid target.

Credit Lyonnais Laing, the broker, continues to take a cautious view of J. Sainsbury following a meeting with the company earlier this week. Laing has chosen to reiterate the view that clients should switch into Tesco, unchanged at 282.5p. Sainsbury also finished all-square at 387p.

There was further heavy turnover recorded in Smith & Nephew as the price rose a further 5p to 192.5p. Several brokers have had a change of heart about presentation arranged by Normandy Property returned from suspension 14p lower at 34p after the breakdown of reverse takeover talks with Galliard Homes.

Games Workshop fell from a record high of 309p to finished 6p lower at 303p after Tom Kirby, chairman, sold 1.15 million shares at 290p reducing his remaining holding to 2.59 million.

MOVERS OF THE WEEK

Table listing stock price movements for various companies like Lloyds Chemicals, UJA News & Media, MAI, etc.

COMMODITIES

Table with columns for LONDON COMMODITY EXCHANGE, ICE/USDR (London & Dtpmt), GNI LONDON GRAIN FUTURES, etc.

LONDON FINANCIAL FUTURES

Table showing financial futures prices for FT-SE 100, FT-SE 250, Three Month Sterling, etc.

LIFFE OPTIONS

Table listing Liffe options for various commodities like Gold, Silver, etc.

MONEY RATES (%)

Table showing money rates for various banks and currencies.

EUROPEAN MONEY DEPOSITS (%)

Table showing European money deposit rates for different currencies.

GOLD/PRECIOUS METALS (Baird & Co)

Table showing gold and precious metal prices and forward rates.

FT-SE VOLUMES

Table showing FT-SE trading volumes for various companies.

FT-SE 100

Table showing FT-SE 100 index performance and components.

RECENT ISSUES

Table listing recently issued stocks and their prices.

RIGHTS ISSUES

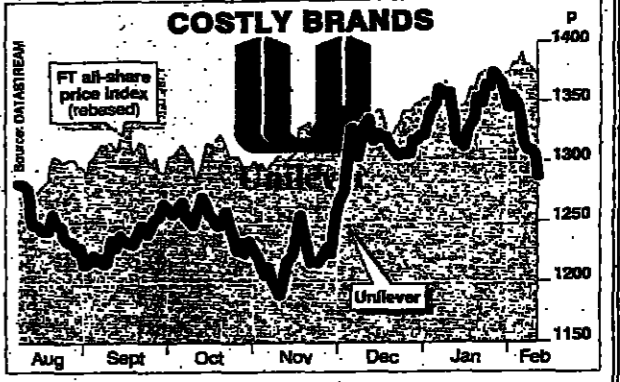
Table listing rights issues for various companies.

TEMPUS

Upstream goes downhill

TRANSOCO, the proposed British Gas upstream and pipeline business, is paying a high price for being allowed to shuffle off its problematic take-or-pay contracts into British Energy, the trading business.

proposed carve-up. The cashflow helped to fund more exploration and gas from Morecambe flowing well into the next century gave British Gas comfort that it could put money into long-horizon projects such as the Karachaganak gasfield in Kazakhstan.



Unilever

UNILEVER ought to be the investment of choice this year. In a slowing world economy, the defensive merits of a big manufacturer of branded consumer goods should become apparent.

UK Equities

NOT a week goes by without a profit warning. East Asia, the chemical sector, followed by textile companies and more recently a gloom from builders and consumer product manufacturers.

real question is whether growth will pick up later.

That seems likely: there is an unusual consensus among the financial community, government and voters that the economy needs a kick, suggesting lower interest rates to stimulate spending.

Wimpey

WHO would want to be in Wimpey's boots? Unmitigated exposure to housebuilding does not sound like a recipe for easy success.

Wimpey's advantage is short-term rewards.

If volume returns then it will see immediate benefits from greater exposure. The down side, however, is large and the company will have little bargaining position in its role as a hostage to the economy.

Closing Prices Page 39

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WEEKEND MONEY

PEPS SPECIAL

The latest guide from Weekend Money



Leaseholders sold short by freehold law

Sara McConnell on the need for greater protection from powerful landlords

Elderly people who have bought flats in private retirement homes are among thousands of leaseholders whose right to buy their freehold is being ignored by their landlords.

of the Leasehold Enfranchisement Association (LEA) says: "Who is going to buy into a situation where so-called homeowners can be sold from one landlord to another, or come under control of the nightmare landlords whose service charge excesses are chronicled daily in the press?"

it is to buy the freehold. But many older leaseholders have made a big financial investment... and they are wary of the extra cost of buying the freehold.



Tenants in fear of the landlord

Owners of leasehold homes are being overcharged by registered landlords, both private and public, and threatened with forfeiture of their homes if they object.

Flatowners take fight for leasehold reform to Commons

Victory in sight: Rene and Eric Tauber who want to buy the freehold of their flat at Tower Grange, Salford

Tenants win right to buy homes

Leaseholders in ten retirement flats this week won a victory over the Co-operative Bank, after the intervention of The Times.

concluded that "tenants' rights were adequately protected and no losses would accrue". The bank now concedes this was wrong.

last October, when Northern Counties Housing Association, the then managing agents, told them that the Co-operative Bank had repossessed the block when the original developer went into receivership in 1993 and wanted to sell the freehold.

Solicitor seeks C&G bonus suits

VERNON & SHAKESPEARE, a Birmingham firm of solicitors, is claiming to be able to help aggrieved Cheltenham & Gloucester customers, who feel they missed out on bonuses in the Lloyds takeover.

But its help comes at a price - about £100 per case, just to find out whether those who failed to be eligible for the pay out have any case in law.

The C&G says about half a dozen people have contacted it to complain about the mailshot. Some were C&G customers who had received the payout, and who had originally been members of C&G Alternatives for reasons other than being excluded from the bonus.

C&G says anyone with a grievance against the society because they felt they had been excluded from the payout could go to the Building Societies Ombudsman, which is free. He has considered many complaints about the C&G takeover and has found that it has acted within the law.

Tony Powles, a Vernon & Shakespeare partner, said: "C&G Alternatives sent me through a list of names to see whether we could take the matter any further. If we can get enough people together, then we can see if we can get a group action going."

Paul Rivlin, head of C&G Alternatives, questions Vernon & Shakespeare's view. "Our advice said any legal action would be pretty speculative. There was not enough certainty of a legal action being successful," he said.

CAROLINE MERRELL

Weekend Money is edited by Anne Ashworth

Quick sales that end up in court

The trustees of Henry Smith's Charity were this week forced to defend themselves in the Court of Appeal against one of the tenants fighting the charity's sale of its South Kensington estate to the Wellcome Trust.

Smith's Charity angered leaseholders when it sold the estate to Wellcome last summer without offering tenants first refusal to buy. Every day leaseholders across the country are discovering that their freeholds have been sold to others before they realise it.

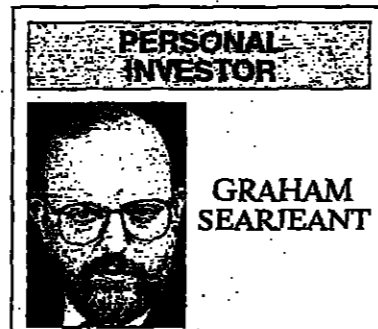
purchase to negotiate with the leaseholders. Zipporah Mainwaring, a Smith's leaseholder, argued in the Court of Appeal that Smith's Charity had been wrong to sell the estate without giving them first refusal, and that leaving Wellcome, as purchasers, to contact leaseholders was not an alternative.

it "did not propose to serve any notices under Section 5 of the Act (requiring the seller to give leaseholders first refusal), once terms are agreed for a sale. Further, it will be a condition of the contract that the purchaser will not serve any notices under the Act until after completion has occurred."

SARA MCCONNELL

Cedric is innocent, OK

Cedric Brown's undignified exit from the executive suite should worry any hard-working salaryman. Even at the end, the scapegoat is under attack for being allowed to receive his lately boosted company pension when British Gas is doing so badly.

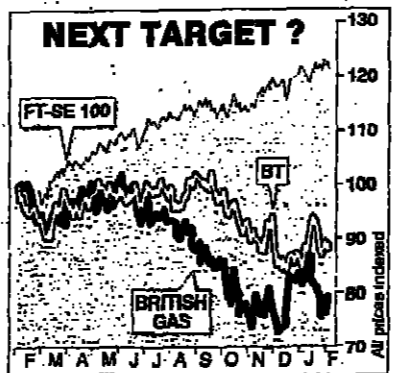


GRAHAM SEARJEANT

Mr Brown has been reinvented as the managerial version of Sid, the common man dreamt up by posh adfolk 10 years ago as a condescending put-down for millions of small investors. Sid was ushered by City smoothies into a safe but exciting new world of privatised enterprise, and offered a handful of used fivers by way of "incentives", as a forerunner of rewards ahead. Ignoring these used fivers, £100 invested in British Gas at its 1986 launch would now be worth about £160. If Sid had put the money in a respectable unit trust, it should be worth at least £225.

Much the same fate eventually befell the gasman. Under Sir Denis Rooke, who created the successful company who created the "fat cat" salaries from America to Britain 17 years ago. His new salary structure neatly fined his £450,000 as part-time chairman.

ever, the troubles now afflicting British Gas shareholders and customers stem entirely from massive and indecently hasty government intervention. Having abjured picking winners, ministers decided to pick losers, destroying successful private companies by live dissection in the name of ideology. Tim Eggar, the cut-and-run Industry Minister, accelerated the onslaught on British Gas after insisting on the most painful option of immediate mass closure for the coal industry. He represents a perverse mentality that values policies higher, the more unpopular they are. For Gas investors, that has brought the heavy losses that tend to go with forced sequestration of one's business.



ated the onslaught on British Gas after insisting on the most painful option of immediate mass closure for the coal industry. He represents a perverse mentality that values policies higher, the more unpopular they are. For Gas investors, that has brought the heavy losses that tend to go with forced sequestration of one's business.

There is a more urgent warning. As a glance at the chart will show, our BT shares have fallen almost as steeply as British Gas over the past year, for the same reason. Regulation set up to guard against abuse of monopoly power is being perverted into a drive to destroy the privatised company, through a two-way plan to slash profits and shrink custom. As the information superhighway farce illustrates, investors should not rely on more sense from Labour. British Gas foolishly angered its 1.8 million shareholders instead of harnessing their political power.

BT may be smarter but there are few signs yet. Utility shares are often most depressed ahead of regulatory reviews. In the long run, however, the 2.5 million holders of BT would do best either to sell their shares or to lobby their nearest Tory MP while there is still time.

Advertisement for Fidelity MoneyBuilder funds. Includes headline "I'm all for progress. So it's goodbye ordinary PEPs and TESSAs and hello MoneyBuilder." and details for MoneyBuilder Cash, Income, and Index funds.

More branches to be pruned as takeovers bite

Nearly 3,000 branches of high street banks have closed in the last five years, and after the Lloyds takeover of TSB, analysts are forecasting more closures.

A private Bill to merge Lloyds and TSB — enabling customer accounts to be transferred into the new bank — is expected to reach Parliament within the next 18 months. This could mean that where branches of TSB and Lloyds sit side by side one may have to close. "Over time, there will be some amalgamation of branches," said TSB.

Ed Sweeney, general secretary of the Banking Insurance and Finance Union (Bifu), which has more than 130,000 members, said: "We will be lobbying MPs hard to oppose this Bill if it means more job losses and a worse choice for customers."

Bifu added: "It's a moral judgment. It might be okay to close a branch commercially, but it's not very sensible socially. What does it mean to the community and the staff? It also affects the economy as a whole."

Customer complaints reached their peak in the early 1990s when the leading banks were accused of chopping branches, cutting staff, removing managers and pushing up charges. Customers were hit hardest in rural areas, where often there was only one bank. When that bank closed, villagers were forced to switch to the Post Office's Girobank or to incur the cost of travelling into town.

"Banks make profits from local communities and their customers yet they're deserting them," said Bifu. "They tend to be the non-profitable branches in remote areas that close — those that elderly

Morag Preston examines the personal cost as banks seek to economise on their networks

people tend to use. It becomes a vicious circle. That branch might not make a profit, but the company as a whole does. "It's particularly hard for small businesses cashing up at the end of the week, forced to take large sums of money on a longer journey."

Lloyds and TSB have about 2,850 branches, Lloyds said: "Last October, before the

money. Otherwise, it means customers from other branches having to subsidise it," said Lloyds. "There's a reason why people aren't using sub-branches so much. Presumably, more people are travelling into work, or they're drawing cash at large supermarkets."

Lloyds added: "There's always a lot of resistance to

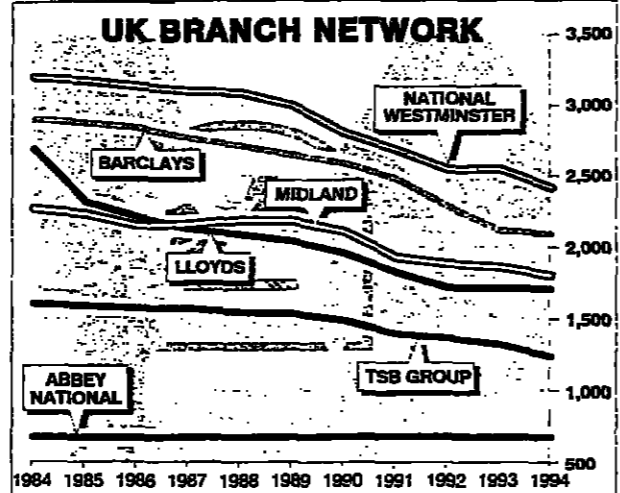
2040. "We've virtually reached the end of our programme," said Barclays. "Where we do make closures, it's always after considerable consideration. They're usually sub-branches in suburbia that weren't open for the full day, that weren't being used enough to justify them staying open."

Barclays added: "The key thing is we offer services where it's most convenient for the majority of customers. Where they live isn't always the most convenient place if the shopping centre has moved down the road."

Where Barclays closes a branch, it is normally replaced with an automated teller machine. "We're aware of the concern in rural communities where branches have been closed, but it's for us to educate customers and to make them more aware of alternative services available," it said.

There are currently 2,300 branches of NatWest across the UK, giving it the second-largest market after Lloyds-TSB. NatWest, the first bank to remain open on a Sunday at a shopping centre in Essex, said: "Our branch network is smaller than it was five years ago. We have to make a decision from time to time, and a balance has to be struck."

Midland describes itself as "peculiar", because of its commitment to "community banking". Last year, Midland cut 1,745 jobs and moved its senior managers into high street branches. Midland said: "Our current strategy is to provide a senior level of service at community level. Our customers want someone in their own community who can make a decision, without going to area or regional level."



merger, we hadn't had a large-scale closure for a year or two, and were where we wanted to be. The merger has clouded the issue a little bit."

Appropriately, Lloyds is strongest in the South and South West, while TSB is traditionally a northern bank. "We look to see if there are enough customers using the branch, and that it isn't losing

people closing a small rural branch. It's bad news for people in the village, and for local business. It's a chicken and egg situation — maybe people in the village aren't using the bank enough. It's a thorny question what moral obligations banks have."

More than 500 branches of Barclays Bank have closed since 1990, leaving about



Left in the wilderness by NatWest

FREDERICK LOCK, above, had been banking with NatWest for 45 years when they decided to shut his local sub-branch in South Ockendon, Essex. As a 65-year-old pensioner, upset by the way his bank has treated him, Mr Lock is switching his account to another bank, (Morag Preston writes).

A couple of years ago, NatWest wrote to Mr Lock to inform him that his branch was being renamed as part of a consolidation programme. Last month, NatWest phoned him to ask whether he wanted to renew his Tessa.

The following week, his sister-in-law went to open a new account and was assured that NatWest in South Ockendon had renewed its lease for a further five years. The week after that, Mr Lock's wife returned from

chipped away. They are grasping my money with one hand, and they are locking the key of our bank door with the other." The Post Office is the only remaining financial institution in South Ockendon, so wherever he moves his bank account, Mr Lock will be forced to travel into Grays. "Rates are important, but we'll pick the bank closest to the bus stop," he says.

Accounts in the palms of their hands



Bedside banking: with a Psion 3a computer and a mobile phone, even hospital patients can keep an eye on their bank balance

LLOYDS and Citibank have launched software packages for use with a Psion, the hand-held computer (Caroline Merrell and Morag Preston write). The software will give the banks' customers access to the latest information on their accounts and allow transactions to be carried out via telephone lines. The Citibank software allows customers to transfer money between accounts and gives details of transactions. The Lloyds

software enables customers to send electronic cheques to any UK account. The Lloyds scheme began as a pilot in the Thames Valley and Eastern area, and involved 30 people. This has now been extended nationwide and abroad, involving another 70 customers, John Leather, product manager emerging technology, said: "Small businesses like the portability and security. Other people like the idea of being able to carry out home

banking whenever they want. But I think chequebooks are going to be here for a long time yet. It's not for wandering into the local shop with." Mike Denny, Citibank marketing director, said: "No matter where customers are, they can access their accounts easily and with complete security." The Citibank software costs £49 including VAT. No price has yet been set for the Lloyds package.

Could the shape of things to come be a bank without branches? In just four years, as many as 10 million people could be conducting their financial affairs over the telephone, according to forecasts.

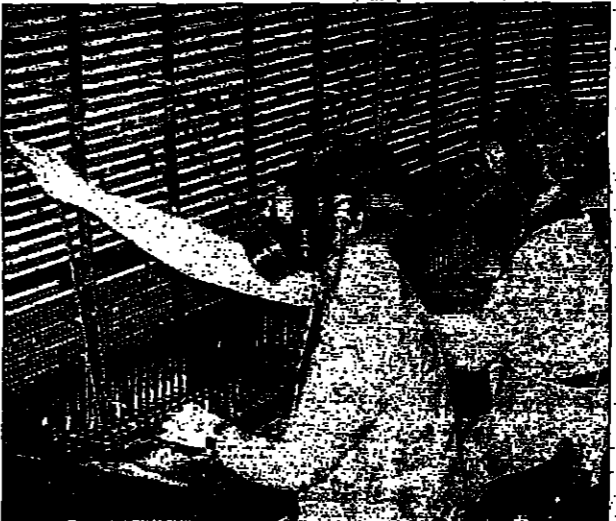
Datamonitor, the market research company, believes telephone banking is so popular with young people that it will grow by up to 30 per cent by the year 2000.

Well-heeled and clutching a brace of credit cards, the typical customer is a male homeowner, aged between 24 and 54. He earns at least £20,000 a year, and there is only a one-in-ten chance he is over 50. Telephone banking is designed for people who prefer to sort out their financial affairs in the evenings or at weekends.

The banks like it because once they have invested in the necessary technology, the service is relatively cheap to run. At present, more than two million banking transactions are made by telephone, with the number expected to rise to 9.6 million in four years. At the same time, traditional high street banking transactions are expected to fall from just under 30 million to around 22.4 million.

The Banking, Insurance and Finance Union (Bifu) says that as centralised telephone services grow, smaller high street branches will close down. It says 20,000 more banking jobs are expected to disappear within the next few years, and says that the industry, which employed 445,000

Battle lines are drawn as banks ring changes with telephone service



On call: not even a war stops a determined telephonist

people in 1989, now has jobs for only 370,000. As demand grows, a two-tier system has developed. There is the personalised service, which allows you to call up an operator 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to pay bills, arrange overdrafts and check balances by phone.

National Westminster Bank and First Direct run such services. NatWest's is called PrimeLine. It has 20,000 customers and went nationwide last month. It is open only to people who earn more than £20,000 a year, and charges are the same as for ordinary NatWest services. First Direct

launched by Midland Bank in 1989, has around 500,000 customers, who make half of their calls outside office hours.

The other option is the "keypad" service, by which transactions are controlled by pressing the numbers on a telephone keypad. This is a very basic operation and you do not speak to anyone in the process. NatWest's ActionLine, launched in December 1989, is a 24-hour keypad operation.

However, the major player in the telephone banking industry is the Co-Operative Bank, which claims to have 750,000 customers and takes about six million calls every year. It has just opened a telephone centre in Skelmersdale, Lancashire, to complement its existing operation in Stockport, Cheshire.

"By 2000 we expect to be receiving 12 million calls a week, based on the fact that our customers are increasing by 1,000 a week," says Terry Thomas, the Co-Op's managing director. "Telephone banking is the face of the future, and it is here to stay."

Other players in the market include Abbey National, which has set up a telephone service open to any of its 1.6 million customers. Barclaycard, meanwhile, is open every day of the year between 7am and 11pm on weekdays and 9am to 5pm at weekends. More than 500,000 people have signed up for Direct Banking, the Royal Bank of Scotland's telephone service.

MARIANNE CURPHEY

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Lilley back on the lower slopes again

As those visiting the Tate Gallery show can attest, Cézanne constantly depicted a Provencal beauty spot, the *Mont Sainte-Victoire*. Rarely happy with his efforts, the painter would return to the scene, again and again, to make one more attempt to get it right.

A mile away from the Tate, at the Department of Social Security in Whitehall, ministers have a mountain they wish to tackle, in the shape of the pension problem.

They are eager to ensure that the nation saves for its retirement, an entirely laudable aim. But, like Cézanne, their efforts have not always matched their aspirations. Sometimes, the results have been disastrous.

The £4 billion personal

pension scandal is a case in point. Responsible for this debacle were the life insurance companies who encouraged employees to leave company schemes for personal pensions with inferior benefits.

In an earlier government pensions initiative, five million employees, encouraged by National Insurance rebates, left the state earnings related pension scheme (Serps), also for personal pensions.

Unfortunately, about 50 per cent are making no contributions of their own. The NI rebates, meanwhile, are being eaten away by life insurers' charges.

The latest pensions big idea, as outlined this week in a speech by Peter Lilley,



COMMENT
ANNE ASHWORTH
Personal Finance Editor

Secretary of State for Social Security, shows that the Government continues to believe that life companies know how to behave honourably. This is in spite of the continuing delays in payment of compensation to the victims of their past misdemeanours.

In Mr Lilley's vision, group personal pensions would cover workers at smaller companies, giving each employee

his own personal, portable fund. In his speech, however, Mr Lilley made no mention of how such pensions would be managed and invested, leaving open another glorious selling opportunity for the life industry.

The sales talk of its representatives would drown out the voices pointing out that group personal pension schemes can be operated

cheaply and efficiently. Watson Wyatt, the actuary, for example, suggests that the cash could be invested in low cost index-tracker funds.

Mr Lilley is right to concern himself with the pensions cause. But, unlike Cézanne, he should not always find himself having to return to the same task. This time he should ensure that his idea is executed properly.

DIY taxmen
Nine million over-worked taxpayers will soon be spending even less time with their families. They will be toiling unpaid for the Inland Revenue, filling in the new self-assessment tax returns, which run from 62 to 130

pages. If they were to charge the Revenue for their labour, the total bill would amount to £1 billion a year, according to Martin Benson of Coopers & Lybrand, the accountant.

Under the self-assessment reforms due to take effect in April, higher-rate taxpayers and the self-employed will be required to calculate their own tax liability. The Revenue will, if necessary, calculate the final figure. But the responsibility for understanding the forms and the law will still lie with the unfortunate taxpayer. This crucial point is not made clear in the Revenue's inane self-assessment promotional campaign.

The whole scheme may be a money-saver for the Revenue but is a serious threat to the enterprise culture.

Handouts all round in bid to gain loyalty

The Britannia has finally revealed details of its cash payment loyalty scheme for members, nearly eight months after first suggesting the plan. Qualifying members can expect to receive £10 to £300 a year, starting in 1997.

After speculating about what they would receive from the scheme, which was shrouded in secrecy for many months, members are unlikely to be ecstatic about the Britannia's predictions of average £40 payments in the first year.

In the wake of the recent wave of mergers and conversions in the industry, and the large one-off payments received by hundreds of thousands of building society members, those societies intent on maintaining their mutuality have been forced to pass part of their profits on to members. Rob Thomas, building societies analyst at UBS, believes societies could part with two-thirds of their profits without harming their business.

The Britannia is the first society to announce a cash-based plan. To compete with the societies that are rewarding customers with reduced mortgage rates, the Britannia is cutting its variable rate by 0.25 percentage points for anyone who has held a mortgage for five years or more. The discount will start on April 1.

The society is using a points method to calculate how much members will get. To earn points, borrowers must make monthly residential mortgage payments of at least £50; savers must have at least £500 in a Britannia investment account. Savers and borrowers must also have been members of the society for at least one year.

Savers will get one point per

Karen Zagor
on the rewards
for staying at
one society

£100 invested, to a maximum of £20,000. Borrowers will get one point per £1 paid each month, to a maximum of £500. Pep, pension and general insurance customers will receive a flat 50 points. Members will get at least £10 and no more than £300. Deposit and current account holders will get nothing. Members who joined after December 31 last year will not qualify for a bonus in the first year of the scheme.

Members will also be rewarded for longevity. Those of five to nine years standing will have their points multiplied by 1.5; from the tenth year, points will be doubled.

Points start accruing this year and the first payments will be in early 1997. The amount to be distributed will depend on the society's profits. The Britannia will announce a value per point at the end of each year.

The National & Provincial was the first to announce a membership loyalty scheme, touting the benefits of mutuality, shortly before the society was snapped up by the Abbey National bank.

In November, the Yorkshire said it would lift its minimum savings rate from 0.7 per cent to 2.75 per cent. Its mortgage rate was first cut from 7.99 per cent to 7.84, and then to 7.39 per cent. The Yorkshire also updated the rates on its obsolete accounts. In the same

month, Northern Rock cut 0.25 percentage points from its variable lending rate to apply after seven years. It also consolidated savings accounts, eliminating obsolete accounts. A second phase of benefits will be introduced in April.

Bradford & Bingley followed in January with plans to cut standard variable rates by 0.25 percentage points to 7.24 per cent from March 1. The gap between saving and borrowing rates will narrow, with savers receiving, on average, rates that are 0.25 percentage points better than those of competitors.

The Nationwide has said it will unveil its plans to reward long-term savers and borrowers in April.

The Skipton has not announced a loyalty incentive scheme as such. Instead, it is narrowing the gap between the interest rates for savers and borrowers. It has also brought in free unemployment insurance for all borrowers.

Mr Thomas of UBS believes that every society except the Birmingham Midshires will come out with some form of reward scheme. "I expect the Nationwide will opt for a scheme which reduces mortgage rates. If there's one thing that will hurt the ples hard it is a cut in mortgage rates because that is very hard to compete with," he said.

In one of the more peculiar moves, Alliance & Leicester, which is in the throes of converting to a bank, has said it will announce a scheme to reward long-standing customers at the end of March. Details are not yet available but borrowers will be among those who benefit.

Britannia helpline 0990 168516.



Room at the top: everyone is being rewarded in some way by their building society

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The wrong choice at the wrong time could reduce your retirement income by up to one third.

FT Quarterly Review of Personal Finance 27 - 28 January 1995

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1987	~£10,000	~£10,000	£10,128	~£9,000	~£8,300
1988	~£11,000	~£11,000	£10,128	~£9,000	~£8,300
1989	~£12,000	~£12,000	£10,128	~£9,000	~£8,300
1990	~£13,000	~£13,000	£10,128	~£9,000	~£8,300
1991	~£14,000	~£14,000	£10,128	~£9,000	~£8,300
1992	~£15,000	~£15,000	£10,128	~£9,000	~£8,300
1993	~£16,000	~£16,000	£10,128	~£9,000	~£8,300
1994	~£17,000	~£17,000	£10,128	~£9,000	~£8,300
1995	~£18,000	~£18,000	£10,128	~£9,000	~£8,300

The figures in the above graph are based on a purchase price of £100,000 on 1 April 1987. The form of annuity is a joint-life annuity - male and female aged 60, payable monthly in advance, not reducing on first death. Past performance is no guarantee of future performance.

You may not realise that when you take the proceeds of your pension fund you face a critical decision: which investment route and which company can provide the best possible income for you to live comfortably for the rest of your life.

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The above graph is designed to show what happened to four identical people and how different their outcomes have become. The graph is not designed to favour one route over another - everybody's personal circumstances are different - that's why you should seek advice about the most appropriate route. Furthermore, you should appreciate that the initial levels of annuities and their relative positions would vary depending on the date of purchase.

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Karen Zagor on computer services available to the private investor at home



Not long ago, real-time stock information and company news were the domain of stockbrokers and rich individuals who could afford a Reuters or Bloomberg terminal. Then came the Internet. Now, anyone with a computer and a modem should be able to get all the information they need to trade from home. However, the UK lags the US in information available electronically to private investors. Investors interested in US stocks or bonds have access to a wealth of information, with real-time quotes at sites on the World Wide Web, including

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InterQuote (<http://www.interquote.com>), which charges a monthly subscription. If a 15-minute delay is acceptable, most online services, such as CompuServe and America On Line, offer quotes for free. A subscription to Zacks Analyst Watch brings analysts' earnings predictions, daily news stories and price updates on companies in a portfolio. Zacks has its own Web site (<http://aw.zacks.com>) or can be reached via Quote.Com (<http://www.quote.com>), while Value Line's quarterly analysts' reports are available through CompuServe.

MetaStock (01707 644874), Indexia and Synergy (01522 424282) software can now be ordered by telephone. A feed service, such as that offered by New Prestel (0171 991-9000), can pipe up-to-date equity and gilt prices into your pc, to be used with the software. Prestel's CitiFeed daily price service is free, while its CitiService Premium real-time price service costs £299.99 plus VAT a year.

ShareLink (0121-200 7790). CompuServe offers a number of facilities including newswires and a clippings service that investors can customise to pull out stories from various sources. Users can get financial newsletters, investment and analysts' reports online. They also have Internet access.

CompuServe does have a stock quote service, but at present, prices are 24 hours old. Jodi Turner, CompuServe content development group manager, says: "In the US, you can get real-time quotes on CompuServe for the whole market. In Germany it's a 13-hour delay." CompuServe does not know when it will have more up-to-date share prices for UK subscribers, but expects to offer 24-hour share trading by the second quarter of this year. Trevor Nell, who runs the UK MetaStock User Group (01892 863476), says: "Things are just starting to change in the UK. Until the end of last year, you had to pay quite a lot for data. Now prices are starting to come down." The strict UK regulatory environment is one reason there is less accessible information here than in the US. CompuServe's Ms Turner says: "Before we launch any

new products, we need to make sure they comply with regulations. Rules in the US are less stringent about what is a financial advertisement." In contrast, the US regulators are now online. The Securities and Exchange Commission, the financial watchdog, has its own Web site (<http://www.sec.gov>) which offers daily newsletters, speeches, annual reports, proxy registration statements and tender offer filings. Investment houses, however, are not exactly leaping at the opportunity to disseminate research through the Net. One of the bigger houses said: "We have been looking at a number of ways of spreading information on the Net, but people feel that if everyone can get it electronically then why should our customers pay?" This may be why Barclays Stockbrokers (<http://www.barclays.co.uk>) offers a good range of general information on different financial vehicles on its Internet site, but gives stock opinions only on its phone service. Philip Bungey of Barclays Stockbrokers says: "Security is still our greatest fear. But we are looking very seriously at what to do with the Net in the future. We want to give investors enough information to make the right decisions." The Times is on line at <http://www.the-times.co.uk> Europay International, the payment product provider, has a new internet page giving details on language, currency and cash machines, including whether the national airport has one (<http://www.europay.com>).

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WPA

Getting started: You do not need much more than a standard personal computer and a modem to get on to the Internet.

Modem: A modem is a device that lets your computer hook into the phone system, using an ordinary phone line. These days, most PCs have built-in modems. If you have to buy your own, look for one with speed. The faster the modem can transmit data down the line to your PC, the lower your phone bill. Modem speed is measured in bits per second. Look for a baud, or bps, rate of at least 14,400.

Access: There are two ways on to the Net. The easiest is to subscribe to an online information service, which will have its own electronic information sources, as well as providing access to the Net. If you are computer illiterate, seek a provider with good customer

support. Outfits such as CompuServe, are designed for techno-phobes and will essentially hold your hand as you negotiate the information highway.

Remember that you pay for every phone call that gets you online, so make sure there is a local access number, or your phone bills will leap. Subscription costs are coming down as competition increases, but the charging structure varies enormously between different providers. Among the better online servers are UK Online, Pipex and CompuServe. America On-Line is coming to Britain later this year.

If you are reasonably computer-literate, you can invest in web-browsing software and hook up through one of the direct Net servers, such as Demon. You will not get any of the fine extras to make your electronic life more comfortable, but you will pay far less. This is the best option for anyone planning to spend hours on end surfing the Net. All

access providers will give you the basics: an electronic identification, a password and mail box (for e-mail).

Software: To surf the Net without a doctorate in computer sciences, you need special software. Netscape has dominated the field with its Navigator software, but Microsoft is challenging with Internet Explorer. Both are very easy to use. If you belong to CompuServe or other online groups, you may be able to download the software directly.

Gossip: You no longer have to be on the trading floor to pick up market gossip. Many online servers have their own discussion forums for investors, or you can join discussions on the Net. These include misc.invest, misc.invest.stocks, misc.invest.funds, and misc.invest.technical.

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Caroline Merrell examines the implications for shareholders of the British Gas demerger

Small investors face some big decisions

Alas, poor Sid. British Gas, the company which once welcomed the archetypal small shareholder with open arms, has now turned distinctly chilly.

When Richard Giordano, the chairman of British Gas, unveiled the company's plans to split up into two constituent parts — British Gas Energy and Transco International — he also announced that it would be inappropriate for the demerged, smaller gas supply company to have a share register of 1.8 million names.

Private shareholders now hold about 15 per cent of the shares in British Gas, down from the 62 per cent peak when the company was privatised in 1986. Many investors have sold their gas shares on the back of the company's dismal performance — the shares have fallen from more than 300p a year ago to their current price of about 243p.

Mr Giordano intends to shrink the BGE share register by making it easy for Sid to sell. One option being considered by British Gas is to allow private shareholders to sell their new, free shares in BGE on a no-fee basis or with a very low commission. The company broker would then sell the shares to institutional investors.

British Gas is not the only company to have recently announced plans to demerge. Hanson, another favourite with the small shareholder because of its high yield, is also planning to split into four companies by the end of this year.

The companies will comprise Hanson's energy interests, its tobacco company, Imperial Tobacco, its chemical division and its building materials interests.

Many analysts believe that the trend for conglomerates to demerge will continue. Others that could follow are BTR and BAT.

For private investors and their stockbrokers, though, demergers are something of a nightmare, especially if the shares are held through a single company Pep.

Here, Weekend Money answers some of the questions about what action private investors should consider if a company in which they hold shares announces plans to demerge.



ANGUS NEWSE

Q What do stockbrokers advise small shareholders to do about demerged shares?

A Your broker may advise you to sell off one holding and increase the shareholding in the remaining company. Which shares to sell and which to keep depends on your view of how the demerged companies are going to perform.

Q Is it necessary to sell the shares, as Mr Giordano is suggesting small shareholders should do?

A No. When a company is demerged, private investors are simply issued shares in the unbundled companies. Hanson shareholders, for instance, will be allocated four sets of shares in four different companies, rather than just holding Hanson shares. British Gas shareholders will hold shares in Transco and BGE. It is not necessary to sell either holding.

Q What are the problems for small shareholders with demerged companies?

A If you are a small investor with, for example, a £1,000 holding of Hanson shares, after the demerger you will end up holding shares in four companies worth £1,000 in total. Dealing in shareholdings of this size can prove very expensive. Increasing the number of companies also increases the number of dividends which need to be collected. Some stockbrokers charge a dividend collection fee, and quadrupling the number of companies increases the costs considerably.

Q What happens if the original share is held in a single company Pep?

A It is impossible to hold the shares of more than one company in a single

company Pep, which means that investors must decide which share to allocate to their Pep before the demerger goes ahead.

The shares that are "dematerialised" from the Pep become liable for capital gains tax and for income tax from the moment of demerger.

The choice of share to keep in the Pep depends on how the different companies are expected to perform after demerger. It may be worth keeping a high dividend-paying share in favour of one which has potential for capital growth because individuals can make £6,000 a year in capital gains free of tax.

Anyone who holds a single company Pep in Hanson shares may be limited on which of the companies' shares they can hold in a Pep after the demerger. At least one of the companies, possibly two, are going to be American and, therefore, outside the rules on single company Peps.

Q Is it necessary to take any action now?

A Brokers say that private investors should hold on to their shares and see what happens. In the case of Hanson, other companies have already been reported to be interested in taking over parts of the demerged conglomerate, an action which would considerably boost the share price.

Break-up sparked by contract losses

THE splitting into two of British Gas is an attempt to resolve the problem of a huge liability facing the group in the shape of the loss-making take-or-pay contracts with North Sea gas producers. These were entered into by British Gas in the late Eighties and early Nineties, when it still had a monopoly.

As the gas market began to be opened up to competition, under the influence of Sir James McKinnon of Ofgas, the gas regulator, BGE lost market share and was left with more gas than it could sell — unwanted, expensive fuel for which it must pay. The average contract price is around 20p per therm. The current spot price is around 10p.

British Gas aims to ring-fence these contracts within the first of two new

companies, British Gas Energy. This business will assume liability for the contracts and for any provisions arising from their renegotiation. BGE will also be charged with the supply of gas to homes and businesses.

As a consolation prize, it will be given the £2.5 billion of assets of the Morecambe gasfield in the Irish Sea. Morecambe is capable of providing no less than 15 per cent of peak daily gas demand.

The second company, TransCo International, will take on British Gas's debt but will have assets of about £15 billion, against about £2.6 billion for BGE. TransCo will have responsibility for exploration and for the gas pipeline network.

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BILL SANDERSON

Morag Preston and Sarah Jones assess the latest deals for savers

A bewildering array of schemes is on offer for savers. Weekend Money reviews the current offers, including building society accounts, National Savings schemes, guaranteed bonds and tracker funds, and selects some best buys.

BUILDING SOCIETIES

For savers seeking the best rates of interest, postal accounts are always good buys. At present, 18 of 30 building societies offer postal accounts. On average, postal accounts provide 1.5 per cent higher interest than their branch-based alternatives, which explains why they fast become oversubscribed.

Donna O'Shea, of Chase De Vere, the independent financial adviser, picks West Bromwich Direct, launched last week. It offers 6 per cent interest on a minimum deposit of £2,000 and an additional 2 per cent bonus until April 30. Mrs O'Shea also recommends Northern Rock's 120 Day account at 7.2 per cent on a minimum deposit of £25,000, but says the notice is a "bit steep" at 120 days.

Mark Bolland, of Chamberlain De Broc, another independent adviser, recommends sticking with household names such as Northern Rock and Bradford & Bingley.

NATIONAL SAVINGS

Government-backed National Savings offers a safe home and a good return. The recent fall in interest rates offered by banks, building societies and insurance companies, pushed the Treasury into cutting rates on National Savings too. However, Mr Bolland says that they still represent good value.

National Savings has a variety of accounts. The age for holding Pensioners Bonds has dropped to 60. In December alone, the bonds brought in £423 million. The minimum investment is £500, and the maximum



receive at least 85 per cent of your original investment.

As with most bonds, the rise or fall of the FTSE-100 is based on the average daily value of the index over the past 12 months of the policy.

NatWest says the High Income Bond complements its Guaranteed Growth Plus Bond, which provides investors seeking capital growth rather than income, with a return of between 125 and 170 per cent of your original investment over five-and-a-half years depending on the performance of the FTSE-100. Both bonds have a minimum investment of £5,000.

Guaranteed growth and income bonds are not perfect. You may not earn the full value of any market rise. In addition, bonds do not pay the underlying share dividends, which do much to boost the returns of a unit trust.

They are inflexible, so if you need your capital, or the market falls, you can surrender your policy only at a harsh penalty. The return from bonds at the end of their term is paid after deduction of basic rate income tax, which cannot be reclaimed by non-taxpayers. Higher-rate taxpayers face an extra tax charge.

But fund managers are realising that the promise of any measure of return is tempting for investors. Foreign & Colonial has launched a new growth unit trust, the Target Index Fund. It aims to offer a return equivalent to either the capital growth in the FTSE-100 index, or the increase in the Retail Price Index, whichever is the greater after six years.

F&C says that since the FTSE-100 and the RPI have achieved capital growth under different economic and political conditions, the fund effectively offers a hedge against political uncertainty.

Tracker funds have been popular because investors believe there is less risk. But the performance of tracker funds is not guaranteed.

For guarantees, you have to look elsewhere. The latest issue of Johnson, Fry's Secured Corporate Bond PEP pays a fixed and tax-free return of 6.3 per cent a year. The return is lower because of the guarantee. Capital is secured after five years. Investors can choose an income or growth option. The minimum investment is £3,000.

£20,000. The current issue earns a guaranteed 7 per cent, paid gross every month.

First Option Bonds pay a fixed annual interest rate after basic rate tax has been deducted at source. The guaranteed rate for a year is 6.25 per cent gross for investments of up to £20,000.

Children's Bonus Bonds can be bought for anyone under the age of 16, at a minimum investment of £25. They are for five years, pay a tax-free guaranteed 6.75 per cent, and can be reinvested. Fixed rate National Savings Certificates are also guaranteed if held for five years and pay 5.35 per cent

tax free. Index linked certificates pay 2.5 per cent above inflation if held for five years.

BONDS

Guaranteed bonds are proving popular at the moment. The guarantee can be a rate of interest or a rate of growth over a fixed period. A popular version pays you a certain rate of interest over five years and guarantees to refund capital if the FTSE-100 index grows by a certain amount.

Sun Alliance's Rose Bond, for example, guarantees you'll get back your initial investment with a return of at least 17 per cent, plus

the equivalent of the growth in the FTSE.

With income bonds, you receive a relatively high rate of income, but you may not get back all your capital. For example, NatWest this month launches its High Income Bond, which provides a fixed monthly income of 6 per cent a year and the "prospect" of a return of the original investment at the end of the five-and-a-half-year term. The exact amount of capital payable at the end of the term is linked to the performance of the FTSE-100. If it rises, you will get up to 105 per cent of the initial outlay. If it falls, you will

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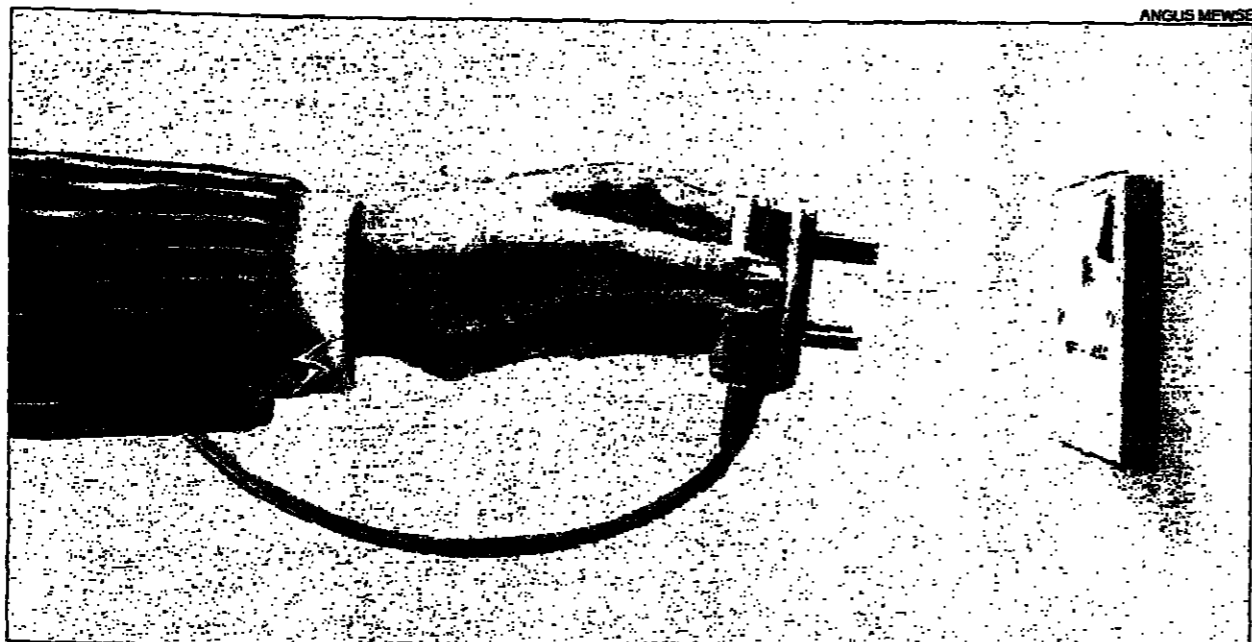
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brings the market



On the trail of the shrinking Grid

Karen Zagor cuts through the confusion over trading in shares of the National Grid

Although shares in the National Grid have been trading for nearly two months, confusion is rife among the shareholders of regional electricity companies (Recs) who received Grid shares as part of the flotation.

Until December, the Grid was owned by the 12 Recs, which had been privatised in 1990. As part of the divestment process, eight Recs have distributed new Grid shares to existing shareholders.

Unfortunately for private shareholders, the distribution was not a simple process: each Rec distributed a different proportion of Grid shares and the sector was hit by a flurry of takeovers at the time of the Grid flotation. At the same time, several Recs consolidated their shares or announced stock splits, further muddying the waters for shareholders trying to measure their holdings. As Shiraz Alfidina, UBS utilities analyst, said: "One hundred shares then would not be 100 shares now."

Unfortunately, companies do not always explain their manoeuvres to shareholders. Francis Cummins, a reader from Basingstoke, received little enlightenment from Southern Electric when he rang its helpline. "The share helpline number was unobtainable," he said. "I was particularly

interested in why my shares had fallen from 150 to 139. I feel that I've lost a valuable asset."

In theory, shareholders should not have lost out. London Electricity, which paid shareholders a special dividend when it consolidated its shares on January 17, said: "The combination of the dividend and new shares should be equivalent to a shareholder's old stake, but obviously that fluctuates because the price of shares fluctuates."

So what should you be left with if you were a Rec shareholder with 100 shares at the time of the Grid flotation?

EAST MIDLANDS
Shareholders should have received 71.3 Grid shares for every 100 old Midlands shares held at the time of flotation.

LONDON
Shareholders should have received 85.28 Grid shares for every 100 old London Electricity shares. Their London Electricity stake will also have changed. Investors with 100 old shares should have had a special dividend payment of £100 (£1 per share) plus 85 new London Electricity shares (50 new for seven old).

MIDLANDS
Shareholders should have 80.9

Grid shares for every 100 shares held in December. The company has since had a 2-for-1 stock split, so holders of 100 old Midlands shares should have 200 new shares.

NORTHERN
Shareholders should have received 107 Grid shares for every 100 Northern shares.

SEEBOARD
Shareholders should have had 48 Grid shares for every 100 Seeboard shares.

SOUTHERN
Shareholders should have had 66 Grid shares for every 100 old Southern shares. The distribution was made in January. After consolidation, they should have received £30 for every 100 old Southern shares (£30 per share). They should now hold 93 new shares for every 100 old.

SOUTH WALES
Shareholders should have 91.28 Grid shares for every 100 shares held in December.

YORKSHIRE
Shareholders should have 75.66 Grid shares for every 100 old Yorkshire shares. After consolidation, shareholders should have received £100 in special dividend payments for every 100 old Yorkshire shares

(£1 per share) and should now hold 83 new Yorkshire shares (five new for six old).

NON-DISTRIBUTORS
Norweb, Manweb, Eastern and South Western have not distributed their Grid holdings to shareholders.

CONSOLIDATION
Norweb has been taken over by North West Water, Eastern was acquired by Hanson, Manweb was taken over by Scottish Power, Swalec by Welsh Water, South Western by Southern of the US and Seeboard by Central and South West. PowerGen's bid for Midlands Electricity and National Power's for Southern Electricity are being investigated by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

NATIONAL GRID
National Grid shares opened at 205p per share on December 11. At mid-session yesterday they were 194½p.

TAX
Grid shares issued to Rec shareholders are treated as dividends for tax purposes. Basic-rate taxpayers will already have had the new 20 per cent savings tax taken directly from their shares. Higher-rate taxpayers owe the Revenue 20 per cent.

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Merger fever sweeps life offices

Marianne Curphey seeks the next likely windfall



Top of the list: Clerical and Medical has invited bids from potential purchasers

Merger and flotation fever, which has changed for ever the way people view the humble building society account, is now sweeping through UK life offices. Just as millions of hopefuls put £100 in a share account in each of the larger building societies, anticipating a payout of cash or shares when they merged or became plcs instead of being mutuals owned by their members, so sophisticated investors are now looking to the life offices. At stake are the potential sweeteners which policyholders could be paid if and when mutuals change status. So great is the perceived interest in stocking up on second-hand life and endowment policies that a new investment trust is being launched next week to invest exclusively in such products. Run by Scottish Value Managers - the Edinburgh investment company in partnership with Beale Dobie, traders in second-hand life and endowment policies - the Life Offices Opportunity Trust is being

not just buy a second-hand policy yourself instead of paying an annual management charge," he said. "Kleinwort Benson and BZW already run such trusts which have only just kept pace with the FTSE-100 index." Meanwhile, Beale Dobie has seen a huge increase in demand for second-hand policies in mutuals ever since Norwich Union signalled it was interested in becoming a listed company. Top of the shopping list is Clerical and Medical, the mutual life insurer which has invited bids from potential purchasers: Friends Provident, NFI and Scottish Provident. In addition, analysts say Scottish Life, Scottish Widows, Scottish Amicable and Standard Life all might change their status. If a mutual converts or merges, will your life or endowment policy be safer? Mike Wadsworth, of the actuaries Watson Wyatt, believes it will. "There may be a sweetener if the mutual converts, but I would not expect it to be more than a bonus of a few percentage points on the total fund return," he said. "Overall, costs are likely to be lower, and if the fund is part of a larger company it will be more financially secure." However, he added that some companies may close an existing fund for new business, with little incentive to achieve outstanding performance.

marketed mainly to institutional investors. Its shares will be available to private individuals via brokers. Colin McLean, managing director of Scottish Value Managers, said the trust places an emphasis on policies in companies "which could benefit from restructuring". He added: "This does not just mean demutualising, which might involve the company paying out special bonuses, but also the flotation of investment arms or cost-cutting measures," he said. "Bonuses may be bigger or smaller than those which building societies have been paying out, but they are likely to be spread over a longer period. For example, a special final payment might be made when the policy eventually matures." Mr McLean says the trust is designed as a long-term investment, which is expected to make a return of 9-12 per cent. One analyst gave warning, however, that investors should look carefully at the costs of the Life Offices Trust before buying in. "If you think a mutual is going to float, why

Are you covered for the perfect replacement?

Once upon a time, cost was the principal factor in your choice of household and contents cover. Now the decision should also be governed by taste - do you like the goods offered by the retailer which will supply the replacements for your cherished valuables? Norwich Union this week signed a contract linking itself with the Goldsmiths Group - a jewellery chain which already has a similar link with Direct Line. When Norwich Union policyholders lose, damage or have their jewellery or watches stolen, Goldsmiths - which describes itself as a catering for the "upper/middle market" - will replace the items. It is claimed that everyone stands to benefit from the deal, including the

policyholder. The agreement is a valuable contract for Goldsmiths, a stock market-quoted company which now gains a steady stream of business. Even before the formal deal was struck, the chain was handling £56,000 worth of replacements for Norwich Union in a single month. Norwich Union obtains a significant discount, keeping down its costs - a piece of news that should be welcome to potential shareholders. Norwich Union, currently a mutual business owned by its policyholders, has announced its intention to seek a stock market flotation next year. The company said that its ability to negotiate a 20 per cent discount had prompted the move to link with Goldsmiths. Previously, local

branches had negotiated individual deals with jewellers in their neighbourhoods. The company felt that the Goldsmiths link would also provide a better service for policyholders, who would not need to provide invoices to make claims. In areas the appointed suppliers do not cover, Norwich Union will link-up with a local provider. Norwich Union is also anxious to deter fraudulent claims, which usually involve a preference for cash rather than replacement. However, a company spokesman said that policyholders would not be forced to take Goldsmiths goods. Other similar contracts are now planned, swelling the list of Norwich Union approved suppliers. Brown

and white goods are, for example, already replaced by Miller Brothers and Scottish Power, and DIY, garden and power tools by B&B Hickman. Pilkington handles household glass, and the RAC has the motor recovery contract. This type of deal looks set to become more common. Connections, the direct insurance subsidiary of Sun Alliance, has informal links with, among others, the Signet jewellery chain, owner of H Samuel and Halfords (for bicycles). Having seen their options restricted to allow their insurer to make savings, Norwich Union policyholders will expect to see premiums fall. ANNE ASHWORTH

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WEEKEND MONEY LETTERS

State pension can leave you with the birthday blues

From Mr I.M. Baird
Sir. You may have thought that all men who paid Class 1 National Insurance contributions during their working life qualified for a state pension on their 65th birthday. But you would have been mistaken.



Due to an unforeseen miscalculation by my late mother 65 years ago, my 65th birthday fell on Tuesday, January 9, 1996. This meant that my entitlement to a state pension did not begin until Monday, January 15, 1996. Apparently, the latest regulations say that unless your 65th birthday falls on a Monday the pension does not begin until the first Monday thereafter.

Is this due to government penny-pinching at the expense of pensioners, or has some mandarin in Whitehall declared it too inconvenient to press a few buttons on a computer to pay pensioners their rightful entitlement?

It is manifestly unjust that despite having paid the same contributions, one man can lose almost a week's pension compared with others whose 65th birthday falls on a Monday. The same anomaly applies to women.

It is not hard to imagine the reaction of Parliament or financial editors if private pension schemes adopted this swindle.

Yours sincerely, IAN M. BAIRD, 6 Park Lane, Haddington, East Lothian.

Take more interest in card rules
WHEN Frank Jones received his Marks & Spencer chargecard statement, the interest charges stood out. A few days later with payment for his last statement of £14.32, he expected interest of no more than a few pence. Instead, he was asked to pay £5.32.

I was being charged interest on all the purchases I had made over Christmas, even though the statement for those purchases is not due until the end of January, says Mr Jones, of Hoddesdon, Hertfordshire. Della Critchley of M&S says: "Our booklet explaining the chargecard clearly states that interest will be charged daily on the outstanding balance. That includes any purchases appearing on the current statement where a balance is brought forward from the previous statement. But we try to be reasonable if a customer has made a mistake or not realised the rules." Indeed, Mr Jones turned out to be a winner, because M&S accepts that it is the first time he has missed payment, and has dropped the interest. The Credit Card Research Group says all credit cards work on the same principle as M&S. Most credit cards give you an interest-free period if you settle the balance on your statement in full. Save & Prosper and Royal Bank of Scotland have credit cards without an interest-free period, but they carry a low rate of interest.

NEIL McDONALD, McDonald Fishselling Ltd, 7 Beeching Park Estate, Wainwright Road, Bexhill-on-Sea, East Sussex.

SARAH JONES

CGT ALLOWANCES DECEMBER 1995

Table with 8 columns (Year from 1982 to 1995) and 12 rows (Months from January to December). It lists indexed rises for calculating the indexation allowance on assets disposed of in December 1995.

The 12 months for disposals by individuals on or after April 6, 1985 (April 1, 1985 for companies) is the month in which the allowable expenditure was incurred, or March 1982 where the expenditure was incurred before that month.

Surprised by 'whingeing' society investors

From Mr D.N. Lincoln
Sir. I am a little surprised at the recent spate of letters from building society investors who claim to have received a raw deal because they will not qualify for merger or bank conversion bonuses. As a self-confessed "carpet-bagger" who keeps abreast of the financial press, I cannot understand how any informed investor can knowingly reduce their balance to below £100 in the financial climate of the last 12 months and then complain that they expect perks or bonuses.

Large surplus is not mutually beneficial

From Mr A. Verdin
Sir. The creation of a substantial surplus in a mutual building society is a result of poor, rather than good, management. Keeping expenses low is important, and a society has a duty to keep a prudent reserve, but the only way in which large surpluses can be built up is by borrowers paying too much and savers getting too small a return. This at last seems to be recognised by the Bradford and Bingley, who will be returning some of this surplus to all participating members. It is not at all clear that the larger societies have been right in the interests of their members. The achievement of a substantial surplus makes the society attractive to other financial institutions and gives added value to shares in a floated company. It can also buy the votes of sufficient members to achieve the board's aim. While some may selectively reap considerable benefits from the change, it is clearly not in the long-term interest of all of a society's members, and even these benefits pale in comparison to those won by the key board members. Nevertheless, if it is the will of the members to change, then the distribution must be fair. If necessary, the Building Societies Commission should be empowered to ensure this. The fairest way would be for the society to pay out to both borrowers and investing members on a formula based on the product of duration and amount of investment or loan. This is a rough approximation of the contribution a member has made to that surplus, and it would avoid completely the necessity for artificial cut-off dates and exclusion of speculators. Societies giving shares appear to be moving some way in this direction. The C&G offer was, of course, at the other end of the spectrum: as unfair as it was possible to be, excluding not only all borrowers but also many deserving long-term investors. Needless to say, I shall move my own mortgage - as soon as I can without penalty - from the C&G to a sound mutual society, and I do not think I will be alone. Yours sincerely, ANTHONY VERDIN, Dry Leys, Fritford, Abingdon, Oxfordshire.

WINNERS & LOSERS

Take more interest in card rules

WHEN Frank Jones received his Marks & Spencer chargecard statement, the interest charges stood out. A few days later with payment for his last statement of £14.32, he expected interest of no more than a few pence. Instead, he was asked to pay £5.32. I was being charged interest on all the purchases I had made over Christmas, even though the statement for those purchases is not due until the end of January, says Mr Jones, of Hoddesdon, Hertfordshire. Della Critchley of M&S says: "Our booklet explaining the chargecard clearly states that interest will be charged daily on the outstanding balance. That includes any purchases appearing on the current statement where a balance is brought forward from the previous statement. But we try to be reasonable if a customer has made a mistake or not realised the rules." Indeed, Mr Jones turned out to be a winner, because M&S accepts that it is the first time he has missed payment, and has dropped the interest. The Credit Card Research Group says all credit cards work on the same principle as M&S. Most credit cards give you an interest-free period if you settle the balance on your statement in full. Save & Prosper and Royal Bank of Scotland have credit cards without an interest-free period, but they carry a low rate of interest.

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LIZANNE ROSE

SAVERS' BEST BUYS

Table with columns: Account, Notice of term, Deposit, Rate, Interest paid. Includes Instant Access Accounts from Bradford & Bingley.

Table with columns: Account, Notice of term, Deposit, Rate, Interest paid. Includes Notice Accounts & Bonds from Cheltenham & Gloucester.

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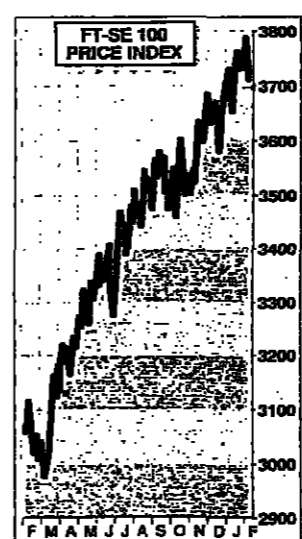
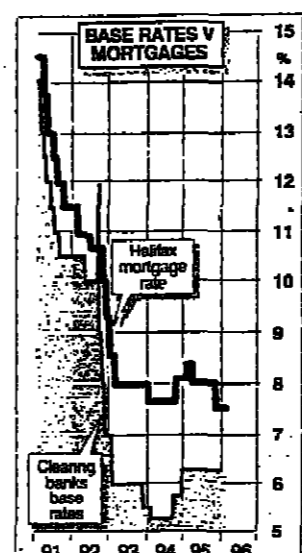
CREDIT CARDS BEST BUYS

Table with columns: Card type, Interest per month, APR%, Fee per annum. Includes Robert Fleming/S&P and Royal Bank of Scotland.

PERSONAL LOANS BEST BUYS

Table with columns: Personal Loans, APR, Monthly payment on £3,000 for 3yrs no insurance. Includes Direct Line and Abbey National.

Source: Moneyfacts, the Monthly Guide to Investment & Mortgage Rates (01922 500 677)



NATIONAL SAVINGS

Table with columns: Gross rate, All tax rates, Minimum investment, Notice, Contact. Lists various national savings products like Ordinary A/C and Income Bonds.

All figures are the gross annual annuity (£100,000 purchase), guaranteed 5 years, paid monthly in advance.

PENSION ANNUITIES

Table with columns: Single Life (level ann), Male, Age 60, Age 65, Age 70. Lists pension annuity providers like Prudential and Sun Life.

Maximum purchase £100,000. Higher rates for smokers. Source: Annuity Direct (0171 583 838)

GUARANTEED INCOME BONDS

Table with columns: Annual Income, Investment (£), Company, Standard Rate (%). Lists various guaranteed income bond products from 1 to 5 years.

PIBS

Table with columns: Fixed Rate, Gross coupon, Buying price, % Yield, Issue price, Minimum purchase amount. Lists various PIB products from Birmingham Midshires.

FLOATING RATE

Table with columns: Gross coupon, Buying price, Issue price, Minimum purchase amount. Lists floating rate PIB products from Cheshire.

Source: ABN AMRO Home Growth - 0171 601 0101

LARGER LENDERS

Table with columns: Lender, Interest rate, Loan size, Max, Notes. Lists lenders like Building Societies and Banks.

LARGER LOANS

Table with columns: Lender, Interest rate, Loan size, Max, Notes. Lists lenders for larger loan amounts.

FIRST-TIME BUYERS

Table with columns: Lender, Interest rate, Loan size, Max, Notes. Lists lenders for first-time buyers.

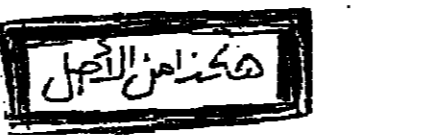
Larger lenders, larger loans and first-time buyers tables supplied by Ely's Guides Ltd.

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Advertisement for Tessa Giving, offering up to 11% p.a. with a free Tessa guide. Includes contact information for Chase de Vere.

UNIT-LINKED INSURANCE INVESTMENTS

Large table listing various unit-linked insurance investments from companies like Allianz, Aviva, and Prudential. Columns include company name, investment type, and other details.



Small gains in thin trading

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

Table of stock prices categorized by industry: ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES, BANKS, BREWERIES, PUBS & REST, BUILDING & CONSTRUCT, BUILDING MATERIALS, CHEMICALS, DISTRIBUTORS, DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS, ELECTRICITY, ELECTRONIC & ELECT, ENGINEERING, HEALTHCARE, HOUSEHOLD GOODS, INSURANCE, INVESTMENT TRUSTS, LEISURE & HOTELS, MEDIA, MINING, OIL & GAS, OTHER FINANCIAL, PHARMACEUTICALS, PRINTING & PAPER, PROPERTY, RETAILERS, FOOD, RETAILERS, GENERAL, SUPPORT SERVICES, TEXTILES & APPAREL, TELECOMMUNICATIONS, TRANSPORT, WATER.

Table of stock prices categorized by industry: ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES, BANKS, BREWERIES, PUBS & REST, BUILDING & CONSTRUCT, BUILDING MATERIALS, CHEMICALS, DISTRIBUTORS, DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS, ELECTRICITY, ELECTRONIC & ELECT, ENGINEERING, HEALTHCARE, HOUSEHOLD GOODS, INSURANCE, INVESTMENT TRUSTS, LEISURE & HOTELS, MEDIA, MINING, OIL & GAS, OTHER FINANCIAL, PHARMACEUTICALS, PRINTING & PAPER, PROPERTY, RETAILERS, FOOD, RETAILERS, GENERAL, SUPPORT SERVICES, TEXTILES & APPAREL, TELECOMMUNICATIONS, TRANSPORT, WATER.

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BRITISH FUNDS table with columns for fund name, price, and performance metrics. Includes sub-sections for SHORTS (under 5 years), LONGS (over 15 years), UNDATED, and INDEX-LINKED.



Vertical text on the right edge of the page, possibly a page number or reference.

40 UNIT TRUST PRICES

Main table containing unit trust prices, organized into columns with headers like 'UNIT TRUST NAME', 'PRICE', and 'CHANGE'. Includes sub-sections for various fund categories.

Advertisement for Coventry Building Society, featuring the text 'Exceptional Mortgage Deals - Talk To Us Now' and 'To find out more, contact your nearest branch. Or call us FREE on 0800 126 125.'

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Additional table of unit trust prices, continuing the list from the main table.

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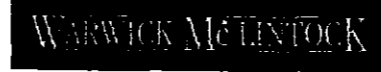
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Bud reb pur

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Saturday portrait: Zola Pieterse, by Rob Hughes

Budd blossoms with rebirth of a career pursued by protest

Only a breakdown of the body, the runner's machine, or the cry of a baby will stop Zola Pieterse from taking a significant stride today towards a third Olympic Games appearance.

The most reassuring surprise about Pieterse, the former Zola Budd, is the smile: it is mature, maternal, positive... far, far away from the 17-year-old who, under a flag of convenience, arrived in England from the apartheid-isolated South Africa a dozen years ago.

One thing that Pieterse has never lost is the intensity, the inner motivation, anger even, that drove a tiny, barefoot girl into the consciousness of the world when, early in 1984, she became the fastest woman over 5,000 metres but could not have her time ratified as a world record because white South Africans were as much the victims of apartheid as black.

serene child dictates at what hour, morning and afternoon, her mother will take her two-hour training run across the remote veldt around Bloemfontein, where Pieterse is in her element.

She found as a child that she had a lightness and a fleetness that could defeat the boys, never mind the girls, on the ten-acre home-stead. Those children were black as well as white, the offspring of the servants, and so, when Pieterse arrived in England, becoming instantly the symbol of violent anti-apartheid demonstration, the ignorance of people who ran her, literally, off the course was manifest.

cause that justifies racial inequality... but she can say it now. She relishes the new South Africa and part of her desire is to get back on the rostrum, this time like Francois Pienaar, the rugby union captain, to be recognised by a whole nation.

"People caricatured my life as if I was someone born to run free," she said. "I can't honestly say that I ever ran for fun, without the goals, I don't think I would ever have run in the first place. I never knew the meaning of 'fun run'."

The past is not just born out of the remoteness, the wild, of the isolated town of Bloemfontein. There, the girls wear flower dresses, the young congregates at cafes listening to Cliff Richard and Pat Boone.

What pushes her? England does. The memory, the suppressed anger, of the people who manipulated her, including her late father, who lost his daughter's trust when he took most of the money that the Daily Mail provided to take her to England, to exclusively promote her career and to persuade the Government to push her ahead of the queue for British citizenship on the grounds that her grandfather had been a printer in Hackney.



ILLUSTRATION BY STEVE MARTIN

I didn't even know who Nelson Mandela was until I arrived in England

"Yes, I was very naive of the ways of the world," she said. "In my running, I was very determined; I was a student at university, but my generation had no news from outside. I didn't even know who Nelson Mandela was until I arrived in England. That couldn't happen today because we can switch on Sky News, BBC News - and there will be no going back, no censorship for our children."

What, in retrospect, shocks and hurts is that nobody tried to explain to her what kind of a pawn she was perceived as. She felt - still feels - that she was a closed book to them and that any lingering ill feelings that she has about their behaviour is best channelled into her running.

course, with Lisa. She would trust, she said, her mother with money or anything else. Her father, if he were alive? No answer - Pieterse saying only through measured silence the pain of her inner motivation.

"I changed my school, my coach. I started to run seriously, aggressively." Motivation now is not anger and loneliness - Lisa ensures that - yet while there is, as yet, no sponsor, nobody to push or prod or even guide, there is a runner whose opponents believe will return at least as strong as before. The new Pieterse is ready for the new South Africa... if only baby Lisa will stay well and silent.

Hansen prepares to emerge from shadow of Edwards

BY DAVID POWELL, ATHLETICS CORRESPONDENT SPECTATORS at the National Indoor Arena in Birmingham today are advised to expect a British record in the triple jump, perhaps even a world record. They should not, however, expect to see Jonathan Edwards.

at the world athletics championships in Gothenburg last summer, but is confident she can today. "She has got to the stage where she believes in herself," Frank Attoh, her coach, said.

Biryukova, Attoh said, "but she saw the kind of training she did and Ashia trains just as hard." Hansen's sessions include two-footed bunny jumps over 3ft 6in hurdles; sets of six, several times over, designed to improve her rebound through each phase. "She trains almost like a man," Attoh said.

for a medal in the first Olympic women's triple jump. "I am not thinking about the Olympics, even though I should be," Hansen said. She is preoccupied, for now, with winning a medal at the European indoor championships in Stockholm next month.

Persistent Andries makes his claim again

BY SRUKUMAR SEN, BOXING CORRESPONDENT DENNIS ANDRIES continues to defy time. The former world light-heavyweight champion from Hackney is still trying to get back to the top and, at the age of 42, he is making a second attempt to lift the British cruiserweight championship. He meets Terry Dunstan, of Vauxhall, again, at the London Arena tonight.

Some Olympic spirit is hard to swallow

As the Coca-Cola Olympics lurch toward us with ever increasing speed, it is time to ask ourselves the following question: what is it that truly embodies the Olympic spirit? There can only be one answer, of course - an American bank.

quired \$90 million to be spent on "protection against a major earthquake". Where have the Seahawks moved to? Southern California, where else? Caught short Faithful readers of this column will recall the footballer of a couple of weeks back who scored eight goals and then had them all cancelled. The match was abandoned due to a shortage of players among the opposition.



Advertisement for José Carreras CDs. Text: "50 José Carreras CDs to be won". Includes details about the competition and how to enter.

Advertisement for the Seattle Seahawks. Text: "Seattle rumbled". Includes details about the team's performance and fan support.

Thaw arrives in time to save Tote Gold Trophy

Squire Silk primed to regain winning thread

By RICHARD EVANS, RACING JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR

THE Tote Gold Trophy, whose prize-money of £100,000 makes it Europe's most valuable handicap hurdle...

when finishing fast behind Lonesome Train at Cheltenham on his only run this term...

Although fully recovered from pulling a muscle in his hindquarters prior to the Ladbroke, Mary Reveley to the Ladbroke...

RICHARD EVANS

Nap: SQUIRE SILK (2.15 Newbury)

Next best: Frontager (4.15 Newbury)

dent. He can handle soft ground but Newbury-style heavy ground would finish him off.

Warm Spell, trained by Gary Moore, bounced back to his best at Kempton last month, his first run over hurdles for almost two years...

Express Gift impressed

price looks plenty short enough. Squire Silk, a winner over course and distance in October...

The opening Mandarin Handicap Chase does not look punter-friendly, although the booking of Adrian Maguire for Clever Shepherd catches the eye...

Question marks also hang over several of the runners in the Mitsubishi Shogun Game Spirit Chase...

Although Idiot's Lady carries considerable stable confidence in the Steve Harris 40th Birthday Novices' Chase...

With winning form in very soft ground and in large fields, Squire Silk looks excellent

value at 8-1. Express Gift is the danger.

The opening Mandarin Handicap Chase does not look punter-friendly, although the booking of Adrian Maguire for Clever Shepherd catches the eye...

Question marks also hang over several of the runners in the Mitsubishi Shogun Game Spirit Chase, but Viking Flagship has ground and trip in his favour...

Although Idiot's Lady carries considerable stable confidence in the Steve Harris 40th Birthday Novices' Chase, there could be some each-way value to be had with River Lottie...

With winning form in very soft ground and in large fields, Squire Silk looks excellent



Viking Flagship, centre, will have the ground and distance in his favour for the Game Spirit Chase at Newbury

NEWBURY

- 1.10 CLEVER SHEPHERD (nap) 3.15 Ashwell Boy 1.40 Viking Flagship 3.45 Well Briefed 2.15 Balanak 4.15 Frontager 2.45 Fellow Countryman 4.45 Andante

GOING GOOD TO SOFT TOTE JACKPOT MEETING SIS

1.10 MANDARIN HANDICAP CHASE (27.720 3m 211yds) (13 runners) BBC1

Table with columns for horse name, jockey, and odds. Includes horses like Squire Silk, Ashwell Boy, and Viking Flagship.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

Table showing performance statistics for various horses on different courses.

RACING NEXT WEEK

Table listing racing events for the following week, including dates, times, and locations.

GUIDE TO OUR IN-LINE RACECARD

101 113143 GOOD TIMES 13 (B.F.G.S.) (4m 2) (Rebraced) B West 7-88

1.40 MITSUBISHI SHOGUN GAME SPIRIT CHASE (Grade II, 2m 11, £18,840) (6 runners) BBC1

Table with columns for horse name, jockey, and odds. Includes horses like Squire Silk and Viking Flagship.

FORM FOCUS

DANCING PADDOY 12m 2nd of 11 to beat Tally Ho in the Victor Chandler Chase at Ascot (2m, good) on 11/10...

2.15 TOTE GOLD TROPHY HANDICAP HURDLE (Grade III, £58,535, 2m 11yds) (20 runners) BBC1

Table with columns for horse name, jockey, and odds. Includes horses like Squire Silk and Ashwell Boy.

FORM FOCUS

PRIDEWELL 4 1/2 to 5 to 1 to beat Squire Silk in the Ladbroke Handicap Chase at Newbury (2m, good) on 1/10...

FORM FOCUS

PRIDEWELL 4 1/2 to 5 to 1 to beat Squire Silk in the Ladbroke Handicap Chase at Newbury (2m, good) on 1/10...

Snow and frost forced the abandonment of today's scheduled meeting at Uttoxeter. The fixture at Catterick is subject to an inspection at 7am because of frost.

2.45 STEVE HARRIS 40TH BIRTHDAY NOVICES CHASE (25,638: 3m) (14 runners)

Table with columns for horse name, jockey, and odds. Includes horses like Squire Silk and Ashwell Boy.

FORM FOCUS

FELLOW COUNTRYMAN beat RIVER LUCAS (5th behind) on 2/10 in the Victor Chandler Chase at Ascot (2m, good) on 11/10...

FORM FOCUS

PRIDEWELL 4 1/2 to 5 to 1 to beat Squire Silk in the Ladbroke Handicap Chase at Newbury (2m, good) on 1/10...

3.15 VAL'S BIRTHDAY NOVICES HURDLE (Div 1, £4,098, 2m 11yds) (17 runners)

Table with columns for horse name, jockey, and odds. Includes horses like Squire Silk and Ashwell Boy.

FORM FOCUS

ANNEE VALLEY 2nd of 10 to beat Squire Silk in the Ladbroke Handicap Chase at Newbury (2m, good) on 1/10...

FORM FOCUS

ANNEE VALLEY 2nd of 10 to beat Squire Silk in the Ladbroke Handicap Chase at Newbury (2m, good) on 1/10...

3.45 RICHWELL CHASE (Limited handicap, £7,068: 2m 4) (12 runners)

Table with columns for horse name, jockey, and odds. Includes horses like Squire Silk and Ashwell Boy.

FORM FOCUS

ANNEE VALLEY 2nd of 10 to beat Squire Silk in the Ladbroke Handicap Chase at Newbury (2m, good) on 1/10...

FORM FOCUS

ANNEE VALLEY 2nd of 10 to beat Squire Silk in the Ladbroke Handicap Chase at Newbury (2m, good) on 1/10...

4.05 DAMPSTER'S DIARY HANDICAP (22,927: 7f) (9)

Table with columns for horse name, jockey, and odds. Includes horses like Squire Silk and Ashwell Boy.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

Table showing performance statistics for various horses on different courses.

Blinked first time

AVR 300 Pouch of Beans, CATTERICK BRIDGE, 3.20 Healthy Risk, Iron of Time, 4.20 Roly Roly, LINGFIELD PARK, 4.35 Sweeney Prince, NEWBURY, 2.15 Romancer, SOUTHWELL, 4.15 Branded Unity

FORM FOCUS

EDMUNDOUR 2nd of 6 to beat Squire Silk in the Ladbroke Handicap Chase at Newbury (2m, good) on 1/10...

FORM FOCUS

EDMUNDOUR 2nd of 6 to beat Squire Silk in the Ladbroke Handicap Chase at Newbury (2m, good) on 1/10...

4.15 VAL'S BIRTHDAY NOVICES HURDLE (Div 1, £4,098, 2m 11yds) (17 runners)

Table with columns for horse name, jockey, and odds. Includes horses like Squire Silk and Ashwell Boy.

FORM FOCUS

ANNEE VALLEY 2nd of 10 to beat Squire Silk in the Ladbroke Handicap Chase at Newbury (2m, good) on 1/10...

FORM FOCUS

ANNEE VALLEY 2nd of 10 to beat Squire Silk in the Ladbroke Handicap Chase at Newbury (2m, good) on 1/10...

4.45 TRIPLEPRINT/BONUSPRINT JOCKEYS CHALLENGE FINAL (National Hunt Flat race, £4,848, 2m 11yds) (23 runners)

Table with columns for horse name, jockey, and odds. Includes horses like Squire Silk and Ashwell Boy.

FORM FOCUS

ANNEE VALLEY 2nd of 10 to beat Squire Silk in the Ladbroke Handicap Chase at Newbury (2m, good) on 1/10...

WILLIAM HILL advertisement featuring 'GET IT FREE!' and 'LATEST ODDS ON TV TEXT'.

LINGFIELD PARK advertisement listing race programs and odds.

SOUTHWELL advertisement listing race programs and odds.

SOUTHWELL advertisement listing race programs and odds.

Wigan way of old boys in Cup encounter
Wigan old boys plan reunion surprise

By Christopher Irvine

WIGAN are hoping that their past does not catch up with them tomorrow. At Salford, a "little Wigan" nowadays, nostalgia will play no part in the attempt by several former Central Park stalwarts to ambush the holders of rugby league's Silk Cup Challenge Cup.

beaten Challenge Cup run to 44 ties since a first-round defeat at Oldham in 1987 - a game in which Gregory played. "That was a surprise," he said. "The run has got to end sometime. Why shouldn't it be us?"

Nerves could well dictate the outcome of their televised confrontation today. In a surprise move, Leeds have switched Francis Cummins from the wing to an unaccustomed position at full back, in place of Alan Tait.

Monsieur Le Cure can add weight to Festival claims

By Our Irish Racing Correspondent

THE Hennessy Cognac Gold Cup at Leopardstown tomorrow, postponed from last Sunday, is likely to go ahead and it affords Monsieur Le Cure the opportunity to add strength to his Cheltenham Gold Cup credentials.

course spokesman said yesterday: "The forecast is for showers and high wind, but we don't foresee any problems with the card going ahead at this stage. The ground is now yielding to soft."

bad mistake in the King George. Master Oats did well to finish only three lengths off Monsieur Le Cure in third place, but his disappointing performance at Cheltenham had led to the horse being pulled up, indicated that problems with bursting blood vessels may still exist.

LEOPARDSTOWN TOMORROW

Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Details. Races include Hennessy Cognac Gold Cup, Martnaham Maiden Hurdle, etc.

AYR

Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Details. Races include Martnaham Maiden Hurdle, Whittlets Conditional Jockeys Claiming Hurdle, etc.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Details. Races include Martnaham Maiden Hurdle, Whittlets Conditional Jockeys Claiming Hurdle, etc.



The big-hitters of women's and men's golf, Laura Davies and John Daly, meet before the Australian Skins event that starts today at Sanctuary Cove. Tom Watson, of the United States, and Peter Senior, of Australia, complete the line-up

Rusty Faldo fails to keep up with leaders

NICK FALDO went hunting for birdies in the Buick Invitational here at Torrey Pines, near San Diego, in an effort to play four full rounds for the first time in five weeks (a Correspondent writes).

"That 69 felt like a 79. It was so easy out there," he said. He finished six shots off the pace set by the American trio of Tom Lehman, Doug Martin and Kirk Triplett.

He faced a far stricter test for his second round on the South Course yesterday. "This one is about two shots tougher than the North," Faldo said, "but I am confident because I am playing well. I just need a few putts to drop. I had a couple of mysteries on the greens and then I began second-guessing the putts."

Traditionally, this tournament has one of the lower halfway cuts on the US PGA Tour and Faldo's compatriot, Barry Lane, was also on the fringe of the first round on the North Course.

Colonial Kelly to collect

POINT-TO-POINT BY CARL EVANS

THE Cambridge University Draghounds meeting at Cottenham today passed an inspection late yesterday and an exciting prospect is ready to run.

Colonial Kelly, trained by Diana Grissell in Sussex and an eight-year-old of great promise, has been kept in full work on an all-weather gallop and that could give him the edge in today's competitive men's open.

Richard Barber, another with a wood-chip gallop, intends to saddle a team of nine at the meeting, which will provide the formidable Polly Curling with her first taste of action between the flags for a month.

Paul Hacking, who finished second on Colonial Kelly in the Times Rising Stars final at Newbury last year, will be in the saddle today, while Auction Law will give men's

CATTERICK

Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Details. Races include 1.45 In a Hutchison Memorial Handicap, 3.00 Mellersays Belle Challenge Cup, etc.

RESULTS FROM YESTERDAY'S SOUTHWELL MEETING

Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Results. Races include 1.15 Martnaham Maiden Hurdle, 2.30 Whittlets Conditional Jockeys Claiming Hurdle, etc.

Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Results. Races include 1.15 Martnaham Maiden Hurdle, 2.30 Whittlets Conditional Jockeys Claiming Hurdle, etc.

Price is reduced by McNulty charge

MARK McNULTY shot a five-under-par 67 to move four shots clear of the field at the halfway stage of the Dimension Data Pro-Am tournament in Sun City yesterday.

McNulty, who won the Million Dollar Golf Challenge at the South African resort in 1987, had a bogey-free round over the Gary Player Country Club course, one of two being used for the tournament.

O'Sullivan pledges to fight on despite injury

By Phil Yates

RONNIE O'SULLIVAN, the defending champion at the Benson & Hedges Masters snooker tournament, has damaged ligaments in his right foot and spent yesterday on crutches.

Devonian beat John Parrott 6-3 in the previous round and has beaten O'Sullivan on two of their four encounters.

BASKETBALL

Table with 2 columns: Team Name and Score. Games include Washington vs Charlotte, Denver vs New York, etc.

BIATHLON

Table with 2 columns: Athlete Name and Score. Races include Les Fumades, Les Fumades, etc.

CRICKET

Table with 2 columns: Match Name and Score. Matches include Lancashire vs Warwickshire, etc.

CYCLING

Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Winner. Races include Les Fumades, Les Fumades, etc.

FOOTBALL

Table with 2 columns: Team Name and Score. Games include Arsenal vs Tottenham, etc.

GOLF

Table with 2 columns: Player Name and Score. Players include Mark McNulty, etc.

HOCKEY

Table with 2 columns: Team Name and Score. Games include London Knights vs Toronto, etc.

When is a shop not a shop?
Aldi
Asda
Sainsbury
M&S
Morrisons
Newman's Own
Purina
Purina
Purina

Slick men of Europe devaluing game's honoured traditions

THIS has been a particularly rotten week in football. The Football Association, the FA Premier League, Manchester United and Arsenal were all party to a meeting in Geneva that sold the ethics of European competition as fraudulently as a trickster selling you a fake Rolex on the Rambles.

The great, the good and the greedy of 33 "top" clubs accepted a proposal from Uefa, supposedly the governors of European football, to keep the door firmly closed on the majority of national contenders. Instead, they will invite double the numbers of clubs from eight countries, England amongst them, to take part in competitions for which many of them have not qualified.

England answer call to World Cup rehearsal

ENGLAND will play in a four-nation tournament hosted by France and also featuring Italy and, probably, Brazil, in the run-up to the 1998 World Cup, the Football Association said yesterday. An invitation to play in the event in the summer of next year has been accepted even though England will meet Italy in their final World Cup qualifier in Rome the following October.

"We think it would be good preparation for the team and an excellent curtain-raiser for the World Cup finals," Steve Double, an FA spokesman, said. "Over the past decade, we have tried to take the opportunity to familiarise ourselves with venues for the major tournaments wherever possible."

All the teams will play each other once in the tournament, which means the Italians will get an extra insight into England's

Rob Hughes cries out against fat cats and marketing men trying to move the goalposts

Rob Hughes, chief executive of the Premier League, devalued his platform to oppose the Uefa president, Joao Havelange, on the grounds that the old dictator has lost the thread of leadership. Unsurprisingly, Havelange took one look at the Geneva proposals and denounced the "egotists" who "only think of the money, when we have to think about youngsters and the principles of serving everybody". If only more creditable figures than Havelange would say that.

Rick Parry, chief executive of the Premier League, commented: "Uefa are effectively saying it's better to have a second team from Italy than a first team from Azerbaijan in the Champions' League, but it has to be done on merit. If you lose sight of that, you lose the very essence of what the game is all about."

Double speak, double values. There can be no merit in choosing a

second team, a failed contender, to take part in a so-called champions' tournament. But it gets worse. Sir Bobby Charlton and Sir John Hall are leading men in the English game, whose knighthoods have been well-earned for services to sport and to the business community respectively. Hear then, Bobby Charlton: "Some people say it devalues the European Cup, but it's progress, it's the way we have to go eventually." No sir, it is not progress, it is retrograde thinking, giving in to the demands of clubs like his own, Manchester United, who think that their wealth and their history allows them to succeed even when they fail.

Charlton says, derogatively: "It's easier to sell to television if all the best teams are in the competition. A team like Deportivo (La Coruña) could win the Spanish championship, whereas we would have to have Barcelona or Real Madrid." The logic is finance at the cost of merit, but John Hall, the Newcastle United chairman, who was appalled at the start of the week by the vote in the House of Lords in favour of listed events being saved for terrestrial television and by the reference of the Premier League's agreement with BSkyB and the BBC to the Restrictive Practices Court, also was out of order. "We welcome the increase in clubs," he said, "but selection should be on merit. The place should go to the runner-up in the Premiership."

That merely placates the argument. The truth is that the Champions' League and the World Cup winners' Cup are now tournaments for the elite. The majority of the 49 members of Uefa have been paid a significant sum to sit out the opportunity of trying to become David's slaying Goliaths.

Goliath does not wish to be at risk any more. He demands to reap the rewards even in years when his quality fades. "He who controls the product," John Hall said, "controls the market."

Precisely, sir. The marketing men who devised this bastardisation of European events will be the first to bale out when the price drops, as it will when customers see the devaluation. Why should the marketers care, for their phony compromise is intended as a short-term bridge until they move on to the next creation, the world club league.

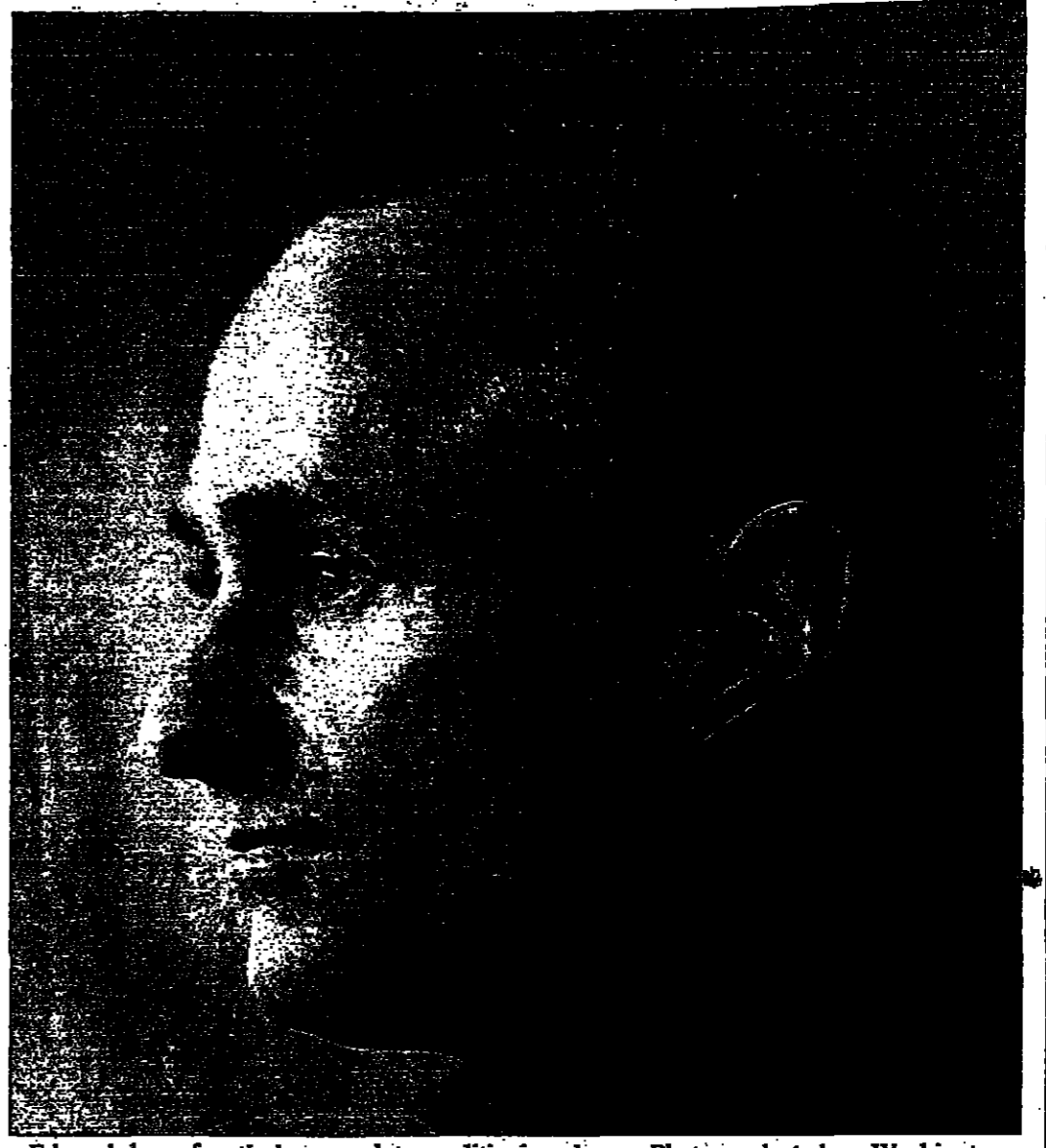
The man who makes Forest run

David Miller examines a training regime which is producing results for a leading Premiership club

They say there is nothing new in football. There is at Nottingham Forest. For 2½ years, it has remained a well-guarded secret, but it will be out in the open should Forest defeat Bayern Munich in the Uefa Cup quarter-final next month. What is new is the fitness programme and the man responsible is Pete Edwards. Pete who? You will not find his name among the list of club officials on the match programme, but his imprint is identifiable on every Forest player who steps on the field. Edwards is part of the reason why Frank Clark, Forest's manager, is a potential successor to Terry Venables as England coach. Indeed, Venables is sufficiently aware of Edwards's contribution to Forest's development that he is considering utilising this dynamic trainer's skills during England's three-week fitness preparation before the European championship. Every move Forest's squad take on the training ground from Monday to Friday is planned and directed by Edwards. He plays no part, however, in overall tactics, controlled by Clark. Edwards's self-styled title is "preparator". You will not find the word in the dictionary, yet such men are operating with most Italian and Germany clubs. An equally appropriate title would be fanatic. Edwards, a Londoner, is as much a driven man as was Jock Stein.

"His biggest influence, besides his technical knowledge, is his enthusiasm," Clark says. "I give him more of a free hand and he takes charge of everything, including diet. He can be argumentative, but that's part of his enthusiasm. He has made an immense difference to the level of fitness and that's contributed to what we've achieved."

Edwards, having studied at length the methods of foreign fitness coaches, became convinced that one of the reasons for English decline was the absence of specialised training, specific to both the individual physique and positional requirement. His background is as a modest amateur player who failed to make it under Gordon Jago with Queens Park Rangers, where the coach was Steve Burtenshaw. Subsequently he was marathon runner, a karate black belt and bodybuilder. In 1987, for no pay,



Edwards has a fanatical approach to conditioning players. Photograph: Aubrey Washington

he became coach of Kingsbury Town. Burtenshaw asked him to provide a team for a practice match with Arsenal and George Graham was sufficiently impressed to ask Edwards to spend a season working at Highbury. Inevitably, there was friction with other coaches.

Edwards knew that he should study abroad to expand his knowledge and paid his own way to work with Lazio. He was able to observe renowned fitness trainers in Italy such as Bartoloni, Zeman and Scala. "I had to throw away much of what I knew," he reflects.

"You only had to look at how Italian players behaved in training: the deliberate pressure, the self-discipline, their fitness with and without the ball, their ability to produce explosive moments of action, the willingness to train twice a day."

Edwards recorded every aspect on video, then returned home to work with Leyton Orient under Clark and Peter Easton. The evidence of his influence subsequently persuaded Clark to invite him to Nottingham.

Small, urgent, demanding, Edwards can undoubtedly be abrasive, yet players such as Steve Stone, Stan Collymore, Ian Woan and the experienced Stuart Pearce — whose reaction might all too reasonably have been "show me your 60 caps" — have responded and improved under a regime they have found makes sense.

Running is geared to positional play, whether endurance or sprints, with three-side-in confined areas punctuated on a white by eight sprints, simulating the pressure of play. Some sessions induce a fatigue that becomes unbearable after three minutes.

Yet recovery periods — equally necessary in matches — between repetition sprints are incorporated into the daily programming. Some days are low-intensity, players confined to small "boxes" so that they cannot run and must pass. Each player's diet is studied individually. Woan nowadays swears by pasta.

"He was known as 'the moan' and couldn't run 400 metres without pains," Edwards recalls, "but he's persevered and now he's on the fringe of the international team. Collymore was the world's worst trainer, yet grew to be dependent on the work he did."

Appreciation between Clark and Edwards is mutual. "It's taken a lot of bottle for him to trust me with what I do," Edwards says, "because his job's on the line." The rewards, at a small-budget club, may yet be substantial.

THE TIMES MATCH-BY-MATCH GUIDE TO THE PREMIERSHIP THIS WEEKEND

BOLTON WANDERERS v ASTON VILLA
Bolton could play their remaining fixtures at Louisa and still get relegation...
COVENTRY CITY v CHELSEA
Ron Atkinson thinks that Gordon Strachan, his player-coach, is as fit as Raquel Wicks was at 38...
EVERTON v MANCHESTER CITY
Alan Ball was still at it again on Wednesday...
MANCHESTER UNITED v BLACKBURN ROVERS
Sherrin and his team-mates have been told to keep their heads low...
MIDDLESBOROUGH v NEWCASTLE
Now that the ill-won't he sign saga of Faustino Asprilla is over, Kevin Keegan can address the more pressing problem of demonstrating superiority over their next-nearest rivals...
NOTTINGHAM FOREST v ARSENAL
Is Frank Clark the next man to lead England into the promised land? He has not confirmed his interest, but denied it as the speculation continues apace...
SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY v WIMBLEDON
Players must game for all manner of reasons, but the recent absence of Newcastle and Blackburn, Wednesday's regular opponents, will not put out a new brand...
BOLTON
BOLTON (from): K Brannagan, S Green, J Phillips, S Curcio, G Bergsson, A Sheehan, D Lee, R Sproston, M Pustelstein, J McStray, A Thompson, S Sellers, A Davison, J de Freitas, C Fairhead.
ASTON VILLA (from): M Bonnici, G Charles, P McGrath, S Staunton, U Eknig, G Southgate, A Wright, I Taylor, M Draper, A Townsend, J Johnson, D Vokes, S Micallef, M Oates, G Farnley, F Carr.

QUEENS PARK RANGERS v LIVERPOOL
If Rangers are bound for the delights of the English Insurance League next season, they are not going to go without a scrap...
BIRMINGHAM CITY v LEEDS UNITED
A first meeting in the League Cup for Birmingham and Leeds, with suspensions denting the pre-match expectations of Barry Fry, Dashi, Poole and Edwards are missing because of past misdemeanours...
TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR v WEST HAM
West Ham's interest in Striker is expected at White Hart Lane, where Sherrin and Armstrong can be reasonably expected to add to their combined tally of 28 goals this season...
HOW THEY STAND
P Pts Goal Diff Recent form
1 Newcastle 24 57 +28 LWWWW
2 Manchester Utd 25 48 +17 WLDWW
3 Liverpool 25 46 +27 WDWWW
4 Aston Villa 24 42 +14 WMLW
5 Tottenham 25 42 +9 LWLW
6 Blackburn 25 41 +13 WWWW
7 Nottm Forest 25 40 +1 LWLW
8 Chelsea 25 38 +5 DWDDW
9 Arsenal 25 38 +8 LWLWD
10 Everton 25 37 +9 LWDD
11 Leeds 25 35 -3 DWLL
12 Middlesbrough 25 35 -3 LLLW
13 West Ham 24 26 -9 LWLW
14 Sheffield Wed 24 26 -9 LWLW
15 Southampton 25 24 -11 DLWDD
16 Manchester City 25 24 -18 LWLW
17 Wimbledon 25 24 -15 WLWL
18 Coventry 25 24 -17 DDLW
19 QPR 25 18 20 LLLL
20 Bolton 25 15 25 LWLL
WHEN TO WATCH ON TELEVISION
Table
Premier League Match of the Day (12.30pm)
Premier League (1.30pm)
Premier League (1.30pm)
Premier League (1.30pm)

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SPORT

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 10 1996

Never say never to England... but not for the moment



Andrew: exciting times

The process of change through which the England rugby team is now going is not a comfortable one. It has been made worse by the constant glare of publicity that has been turned on to the sport in recent years and certainly by the declaration of the open game this season.

season, there have been calls for one or all of us to return to the side. Such speculation is increased when my new club, Newcastle, plays against top-flight opposition, such as Harlequins in the Pilkington Cup today and New South Wales next Tuesday, but there is no prospect of my playing anything other than club rugby this season. I retired from international rugby last October and I have played only two or three games since then.

Rob Andrew rules himself out of the national team reckoning — at least until next season

is changing on a weekly basis and where I am now is exciting, exhilarating. Who knows where we will all be a year from now? For that reason, I am not ruling out any possibility, but life has moved on and it would take a very special set of circumstances for me to appear in an England shirt again. For now, the selectors have their job to do and both Moore and Morris can be discounted; they have retired from first-class rugby. Richards is different: he is still a

member of the squad and whether he plays for England again is a matter of selectorial judgment based on their knowledge of him as a player and the kind of game they want the team to play. Whenever a longstanding half-back partnership changes — as every one of the five nations in this season's championship is in the process of finding out — it must have a significant impact on the side as a whole. Yet the two positions cannot be looked at in

isolation; they are only part of the character of the team. Over the past few years, England have identified areas of strength and used them to considerable advantage. Much of the success in that period was based on forward power and, if there was a bias in that direction, at the expense of such runners as Will Carling, Jerry Gascott or Rory Underwood, it could be justified both by results and by the critical influence of the forwards in international rugby. The trick is to achieve a balance between the two distinct areas of the game and that is not easy. You have two very different groups of people trying to build a game together, with No 9 and No 10 in the middle of it all attempting to pull the strings. Perhaps Mike Catt's decision to remove himself from contention as a stand-off half will take some pressure from Paul Grayson while the squad as a whole needs its collective confidence restored. That is the role of management. For me, my season is just beginning and I am looking forward to next September, when I can be a part of a new club team from the start; maybe, at that stage, my old friends, Dean Ryan and Steve Bates, will look at my form with a critical eye and tell me it is time to call it a day!

Sponsor's deal kits out United with £60m

BY PETER BALL

MANCHESTER United hit the jackpot yesterday. The club signed a new kit sponsorship and merchandising deal with Umbro worth around £60 million over six years, setting a record for British sport that far surpasses the previous largest sum of £26 million over four years which Reebok agreed with Liverpool last year.

Neither United nor Umbro would release the exact figures, but it is unlikely to be much less than £10 million a year. "You can conjecture that the figures reflect United's status as one of the leading clubs in the world," Peter Kenyon, Umbro's worldwide chief operations officer, said at a hastily-arranged press conference yesterday.

Forest on the run 46
World Cup rehearsal 46

allow a second English club into the European Cup. With United the leading candidates to take the second place if they do not win the FA Carling Premiership, the amount of Europe-wide television they can guarantee makes them an even hotter property than did the £24 million turnover from their commercial activities, a figure that outstrips Rangers' total income.

That status, financially at least, was increased this week. It is no coincidence that the deal, and the amount, should be agreed in the week that Uefa, the European governing body of football, proposed to stakes. It came close to gaining Liverpool before Reebok won the contract with a late bid, but Umbro's success in keeping Manchester United will be an even greater disappointment to the company. Nike is believed to have offered United £50 million over four years in an effort to attract the most successful merchandising operation in sport.

"We considered three options," Martin Edwards, the United chairman and chief executive, said yesterday. "We looked at one major multi-brand sports-goods manufacturer, we considered doing the operation ourselves and we looked at Umbro, who are a football specialist." The previous four-year contract still had two years to run, but it has been subsumed under the new one, taking the agreement up to 2002. The decision to renegotiate now reflected the change in the market with the contract finally being signed yesterday lunchtime, giving time for United to inform the Stock Exchange before releasing the information publicly.

Walcott leads moves to break Sri Lanka deadlock



A sign at Sydney's airport sums up Australia's attitude to playing in Colombo as Taylor, centre, and his team begin the journey to India. Photograph: David Grey

Anxiety clouds World Cup gala

BY SIMON WILDE

WHEN the first World Cup was staged 21 years ago, it opened to little pomp and ceremony. By way of gesture, England's opening match against India took place at Lord's, where Madan Lal bowled the first ball to John Jameson, Geoff Boycott preferring to turn out for his county rather than his country.

No one will describe tomorrow's opening of the sixth World Cup as understated. More than 100,000 people will assemble inside Eden Gardens, Calcutta, while two billion more watch on television, for a 75-minute spectacular masterminded by Gianfranco Lunetta, who brought the

world the ceremonies that opened the 1990 football World Cup and closed the Barcelona Olympics. The first cricket ball the crowd will see will be made of laser-beams, into which will descend Sushmita Sen, a former Miss Universe, wrapped in the flags of the 12 competing teams. Controversy has raged in India for weeks about the Miss Sen's decision to divest herself of the flags and hand them to the respective captains.

It will not be last time during the next five weeks India finds itself torn between culture and consumerism as it attempts, along with the other joint-hosts, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, to cash in on a tournament that is expected to generate profits for its organisers alone of £25 million, some 75 times more than were realised in 1975.

The chances of the deadlock being broken over the refusal of Australia and West Indies to play in Colombo looked to have marginally improved yesterday. Officials from the International Cricket Council (ICC) had no sooner arrived in Calcutta than they began informal talks prior to a meeting of the various parties today.

The diplomacy of Sir Clyde Walcott, the ICC's chairman and David Richards, its chief executive, is the last realistic hope of the crisis being resolved, though the world governing body's reputation as a toothless tiger tempered any optimism.

Jockeys warm to mechanical horse

BY RICHARD EVANS, RACING JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR

WHO said horses are not machines? Rudolf, a non-thoroughbred of indeterminate sex and age, looks set to become the most sought-after ride in racing — because he is a machine.

The mechanical horse, formally known as "The Ride-Away," is the first of its kind to be installed at a racecourse and will enable jockeys at Newbury to have a warm-up in the weighing room before riding for real at the Berkshire course.



Osborne puts the new mechanical horse through its paces in the weighing room at Newbury yesterday.

Jamie Osborne, who, like leading riders such as Richard Dunwoody and Frankie Dettori, practises at home on a similar machine, put the stationary nag through its paces yesterday and explained the benefits. "There are very few sports where the participants would go out and perform without

having a warm-up. You can't drag a real horse into the weighing room and warm up the relevant muscles — but you can on this.

"The muscles we use in riding a horse are unique to riding. Bicycling is the nearest you get to it but this machine is invaluable. You can push it as long as you like, as hard as you like for as long as you like to get fit at the start of the season or keep your ticking over during a cold snap when racing is off."

The machine was invented by Richard Perham, a leading freelance jockey riding in Saudi Arabia, and retails at £650. The frame is based on a series of springs providing a forward motion and it has a pivoted neck on which jockeys can fine-tune their riding style, whip-handling and drive-to-the-line finishes.

Carl Llewellyn, who won the 1992 Grand National on Party Politics, bought a mechanical horse last year after being banned from riding on three occasions for breaching whip rules. "When you are unfit or not going racing due to the weather, the first thing that goes every time are the knees: that is where the main pressure is during racing," he said. "You can go bicycling, swimming or running but it never gets your knees fit. This machine does the trick."

Racing, pages 44-45

Lions booked to tour South Africa in 1997

HARD on the heels of the International Rugby Football Board's (IRFB) ringing acclamation of the sport's traditional principle of touring, the South African Rugby Football Union (SARFU) confirmed yesterday the visit of the British Isles next year (David Hands writes).

"We view it as a very, very important tour," Edward Griffiths, the SARFU chief executive, said. Though the full itinerary for the 12-match tour in May and June, 1997, will not be finalised until next week, it will include internationals in Cape Town, Johannesburg and Durban. It is hoped to confirm the management team by the end of this season.

One of the decisions taken by the IRFB council at its annual meeting last month was a commitment to a regular programme of tours. "They are fundamental to the development of players," Vernon Pugh, the IRFB chairman, said. "There is a wish on everyone's part that the Lions continue."

Though some individual players and officials in Britain have queried the viability of the touring concept, each of the home unions has been asked to make allowance for a Lions tour every four years in their contractual arrangements with players and clubs. It has yet to be clarified who, in the open era, will pay the players in a combined team: there is a presumption that many of the costs will be borne by the host unions in South Africa and Australasia.

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Spouse will wield power behind the scenes as curtain goes up on yet another Government

Italy turns spotlight on 'Lady M'

"EXIT the brunete, enter the blonde," observed the normally staid *Corriere della Sera* this week. This was not a reference to the apparently endless succession of busy and long-legged female presenters on Italian television, but a political point: every time Italy gets another "revolving door" government, a new First Lady comes in with the new Prime Minister.

Marina Maccanico, wife of Antonio, the Prime Minister-designate, has hardly had time to change the wallpaper at the Palazzo Chigi, the Italian equivalent of 10 Downing Street. Signor Maccanico does not formally take over until he puts together a broad coalition to complete Italy's political and constitutional reforms. In the meantime, Lamberto Dini remains caretaker Prime Minister, sharing the limelight with his wife, Daniela.

In the public mind, however, power has already shifted, and attention is focusing on "Lady M", as the Italian press calls her. Although the Italian man likes to project a macho image, his wife (or mistress) is

ROME FILE by RICHARD OWEN



often the power behind the throne. A leader's wife, *Il Messaggero* remarked this week, wields "more than half the power" by supporting him, providing him with a refuge and putting up with his female admirers.

Italy's First Ladies have certainly been striking figures. Veronica Berlusconi, second wife of the media tycoon who was briefly Prime

Minister, is a former model who claims that the hyperactive Silvio still finds time to "whisper sweet nothings in my ear". Signora Dini is a powerful and wealthy businesswoman, with interests in Latin America — she has Costa Rican citizenship from her first husband. Signora Maccanico, by contrast, has devoted herself to bringing up her son, now 23, playing

tennis with her husband, and running their home. Rather like her husband, she has operated behind the scenes, with only occasional forays into the business world, including a brief stint in public relations.

The Maccanicos' understated style and discreet social network may prove to be an asset. Signor Maccanico has been Italy's shadowy "Mr Fixit" for decades, rising through the upper echelons of the civil service to be the right hand man of successive Presidents and Prime Ministers. Their third floor flat on the Via della Scrofa, just round the corner from the Parliament and the Prime Minister's office in Rome's old city,

is also the headquarters of the Alleanza Nazionale, the "post-Fascist" party led by Gianfranco Fini, whose support for the Maccanico reforms is crucial.

The Maccanicos have for years entertained Italy's most powerful businessmen, bankers and politicians, both at the Via della Scrofa and at a tennis club frequented by the elite. Their intimate friends include Gianni Agnelli of Fiat, Enrico Cuccia of Mediobanca and Carlo De Benedetti of Olivetti — three men who between them own most of Italy.

As Italy's party leaders pondered Signor Maccanico's reform programme this week, Signor Agnelli told them bluntly: "I know Maccanico, he's a first class man."

Signora Maccanico would seem the ideal woman to charm the Left and the Right, as well as the Agnellis and Cuccias. She is a statuesque blonde with piercing blue eyes who combines a striking presence with political acumen — she has a law degree — and a diverting passion for the cinema.

Women rule the roost

MOST Italian men will not have been surprised by the news that women wield more than half the power in high places: the same is true in low places.

The magazine *Oggi* this week gave the Italian male ego a further battering with a photo-montage showing an elegant female hand dumping a despondent male figure in a dustbin, with the caption, "Poor boy, what a messy end."

The accompanying opinion poll showed that men are boss in only 7 per cent of households. In 69 per cent, there is joint control.

There were similar figures for who controls the family budget — husband and wife in 57 per cent of households — and who decides where the family goes on holiday — joint decision in 69.5 per cent of homes. In only 15 per cent of households does the man make the big financial decisions. Some attribute this to women's growing independence.



Marina Maccanico, wife of the new Prime Minister

'Miracle' is godsend for ailing port

A YEAR after it first wept blood, the miracle-working Madonna of Civitavecchia is still drawing the crowds at the rate of 5,000 a week. The controversial statuette, brought from Medjugorje in Herzegovina and seen to cry tears of blood in February last year by an electrician's five-year-old daughter, now stands in the parish church, where it has allegedly cured 23 seriously ill patients,

including two who woke up from "irreversible comas". Critics point out that the results of tests on the Madonna by a Vatican committee have yet to be revealed, and that Civitavecchia is a rundown port 50 miles from Rome badly in need of income from pilgrims. The Mayor, a former Communist, is going ahead with plans for a new church, five new hotels and a business centre.

Tiger smugglers sentenced to jail

FROM ROGER BOYES IN BONN

TWO German smugglers have become the first men to be tried and convicted in a Western court for attempting to sell the skin of a Siberian tiger.

The verdict — in which one brother was sentenced to eight months in jail, and the other, to one year — marks an important milestone in the battle to save one of the world's most endangered species. There are only about 200 of the tigers left in the Russian Far East, prowling the Taiga between Vladivostok and Khabarovsk.

The two were arrested at a motorway café outside Bonn, where they were supposed to hand over the skin of the illegally killed tiger for around £25,000. The men were ethnic Germans, born in Russia, and were acting for a Russian mafia boss. Police searching their flat found a

tiger head in the deep freeze, a polar bear skin and several other rare furs.

Every part of the tiger can yield a profit. Asians, in particular, are willing to pay high sums for parts of the Siberian tiger. The skull kept near a pillow is supposed to scare away evil spirits — there was an ancient Asian tiger-god called Amba. Tiger bones are supposed to help against rheumatism, the fat from the animal, is used to cure haemorrhoids and vomiting. Tiger teeth, according to some Asian superstitions, guard against asthma and rabies. The tiger brain, administered in the correct dosage, is an antidote for spots and laziness.

A tiger processed into pills, creams, balms, compresses and powders can be worth around £450,000. In Korea, for example, tiger penis soup can cost up to £200 a serving. The reason is that male diners hope to increase their potency — the Siberian tiger is capable of copulation every 20 minutes.

The skins are in a way a mere footnote to the business, the West showing the greatest interest. Pressure from the World Wide Fund for Nature among others has led to hunting laws being tightened, but this week's sentences are the first time that a jail term has been enforced.



The Siberian tiger

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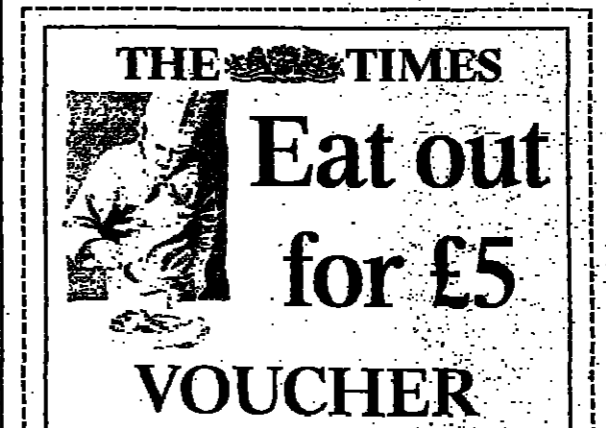


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DINING OUT is always a pleasure, but with *The Times* Eat Out For £5 offer, starting next Monday, February 12, it is also easily affordable. To apply, cut out the vouchers which are appearing daily. If you missed the guide send two first class stamps to: *The Times* Eat Out For £5 offer, PO Box 481, London E1 9BD.

Additions to our guide: Mootown Lodge Hotel, Ringwood Hants, main course dinner M, T, W, Th: 01425 471400; 36 On The Quay, Emsworth, Hants, main course lunch M, W, Th, F: 01243 375592; Seasons Restaurant, Ashton under Lyne, Cheshire, main course lunch M, T, W, Th, F: 0161 3305899; The Falcon Hotel, Bromyard, Herefordshire, two-courses lunch M, T, W, Th, F, S, dinner M, T, W, Th, F: 01885 433034; Samratt Indian Restaurant, Putney, London SW15, two courses, lunch M, T, W, Th, Sun, dinner T, W, Th, Sun: 0181-788 0110; Asholi Arms Hotel, Bridgehead, Perthshire, main course lunch/dinner (except steaks) M, T, W, Th, F: 01330 727219.



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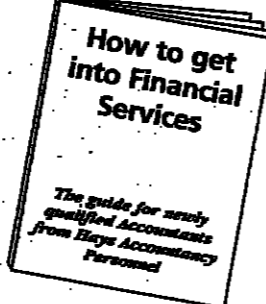
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CONTINUES ON PAGES 41 AND 42

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OPINION

After Birmingham, what? Sir Simon Rattle must go out and prove himself all over again



VISUAL ART 1

The very epitome of a Victorian artist? The centenary shows for Lord Leighton shed new light



THE TIMES ARTS

VISUAL ART 2

Cézanne of the day: our celebration of the Tate show focuses on Woman with a Coffeepot



BASE NOTES

Dame Diana Rigg is expected to tour America with the National Theatre's Mother Courage



What will Sir Simon Rattle do with the rest of his life? I have thought of little else since Tuesday...

Rattle can't sell out now, can he?

The "Big Five" orchestras, only one has a conductor under 60. Any of them could come wooing Rattle...

Consider the evidence. First, nobody has yet come near to cracking the "modern music problem"...



RICHARD MORRISON

That is one reason for depression. There are more. For most of this century the record industry has been the motor of the classical music world...

thousands of soloists and conductors rich: turned a few into household names. Now the old motor is grinding to a halt...

That is bad luck for Rattle and the other gifted conductors now slipping gracefully into late boyhood...

mean. A gripping new book - Charisma in Politics, Religion and Media, by David Aberbach... Rattle could do that. It would be easy for him to settle for super-rich comfort now...

sure up in this charismatic sense. They are successful businessmen who lead comfortable lives. Their interpretations are often clever, but not wrenched from the black hole of trauma...

Victorian volcano of bridled passion

John Russell Taylor goes in search of the inner life of Lord Leighton on the centenary of his death

Frederic, Baron Leighton was the very image of the Victorian artist as public figure. This meant, of course, something very different from our own conception of a life led in public...

bevy of adoring and fiercely protective society ladies, but never married. There was never, Mrs Barrington, his first biographer, assures us, any hint of impropriety with any of his models...

- Leighton Centennial Exhibition, sponsored by Christie's, Royal Academy, London W1 (0171-430 7430), until April 21
The Leighton Frescoes and Leighton as a Book Illustrator, 1784, London SW7 (0171-938 8441) until Sept 8 and May 6 respectively
Leighton and his Sculptural Legacy, presented by Joanna Barnes, Matthiessen Gallery, London SW1 (0171-930 4215), until May 22
Relentless Perfection: At Home with Lord Leighton, Leighton House, London W14 (0171-602 3316) until April 21

show which aims to recreate life there in Leighton's heyday. It must have been pretty luxurious, and the aesthetic splendour of the house's Arab Hall somehow suggests har-

But what or whom did he love, what or whom did he passionately desire? Or was he a great artistic technician but a sadly cold fish?

Leighton was the leader of what William Gaunt dubbed the "Victorian Olympians" and lived up to the label in his demeanour and his work...

At worst we might quote at him Arthur Hallam's warning to the young Tennyson: "Alfred, we cannot live in art." Leighton might reasonably answer that he did not: his life was full of teaching, working for the Royal Academy...



The handsomest man of his day: self portrait of Frederic, Lord Leighton, painted in 1880. He never married, but attracted no sexual scandal even after the Wilde case

left vague, is not minutely observed. Leighton was one of the most brilliant draughtsmen in an age of deep concern with the art of drawing...

three major sculptures, Leighton was disproportionately influential in sculpture, mainly because of this skill in rendering physical action...

sculptural form, and a number of these three-dimensional sketches appear in the Academy show. Clearly his art was his reality, and his hard finish holds in check, but perhaps only just, a volcanic intensity of feeling...



"She gazes towards us, her frowning solemnity offset by the hint of a smile": the magisterial splendour of Woman with a Coffeepot, c.1895, Musée d'Orsay, Paris

PERSPECTIVES ON A PIONEER: DAY 3 Richard Cork continues his guide to the Tate's Cézanne retrospective

Nobody knows who this woman is, nor precisely when Cézanne painted her. But she has become one of the most unforgettable, iconic figures in Western art.

The blue-robed sitter could hardly be more imposing. She gazes towards us, her frowning solemnity offset by the hint of a smile. The thin hair flattened on her crown emphasises her head's essential, sculptural form...

No doubt she welcomes the chance to savour her coffee, and take stock of the duties ahead. But even the coffeepot seems stern and vigilant...

Cézanne softens the mood on the left edge, where hazy flowers seem to detach themselves from the wallpaper and float in space. On the whole, though, he asserts a resolute sense of order throughout this masterful painting.

Cézanne is at the Tate Gallery until April 22, sponsored by Ernst & Young. For advance booking, which is advised, telephone 0171-430 0000. On Monday, Richard Cork discusses Mont Sainte-Victoire Seen from Bibemus, c.1891

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MUSIC

A British debut at 92 — or is it 93? Russian maestro Ilya Musin prepares for the Barbican



RISING STAR

Belinda Hatley has (very daintily) battled her way to the front row of the Royal Ballet

THE TIMES ARTS



RECORDS

Billy Crystal in *Forget Paris*, and other new videos and records, reviewed in Weekend, page 14



ON MONDAY

How did Wagner fare? Rodney Milnes reviews the new *Tristan and Isolde* at the Coliseum

Just what took you so long?

Hilary Finch talks to a nonagenarian Russian conductor on the eve of his London debut

When Ilya Alexandrovich Musin makes his London conducting debut with the Royal Philharmonic at the Barbican next Saturday, he will be in his ninety-third or ninety-fourth year: it all depends on your historical viewpoint. He was born on Christmas Eve, 1903, by the old Russian calendar; and his birthday changed to January 7, 1904, when the Western calendar was later adopted.

St Petersburg, of course, got through three name changes between the day when he and Shostakovich enrolled together as students and the evening a year ago when Musin conducted the St Petersburg Philharmonic in the programme of Mozart, Rimsky-Korsakov and Prokofiev which he will be bringing to London.

Musin has been the single most important influence in forging the so-called Leningrad school of conducting, and with it a legacy of conductor-pupils such as Valery Gergiev, Yakov Kreizberg, Semyon Bychkov and Mariss Jansons who are now shaping the musical fortunes of both Eastern and Western Europe. But Musin himself was caught in the wheel of time. The more visible fame and influence now enjoyed by his pupils was firmly denied him by history.

He was one of the very few conductors who refused to join the "Creative Union of Musicians and Composers" in the years of Stalin. Consequently, he did not exist. "In order to be recognised as a musician, one had to be constantly praising Stalin. I kept independent of

any union, any party. Of course, it halted my career. But what I hate most is to be dependent on someone else." His musical fulfilment was to come entirely through teaching. And he is as passionate about it today as he was when he worked with his first students at the St Petersburg Conservatoire. His philosophy is simply that "music must be made visible with the hands".

Just how this was to be done, he had to find out for himself, first learning from Nikolai Malko, the pupil of Rimsky-Korsakov who introduced Shostakovich's First Symphony to London in 1935, and, above all, following closely every rehearsal of the conductors from the West who flooded into Leningrad in the early 1920s.

The first move, it seems, is to throw away the baton. "Yes, since the baton is the artificial part of our conducting, something we add on to the arm. It is difficult, after all, to be expressive while clenching the fist. So much easier when you can touch the sound with the tips of your fingers."

At a Royal Academy masterclass recently, where the dreaded stick was much in evidence, Musin, a lean, dapper figure in a tweed jacket and polished brogues, quietly tells his students to "relate to the baton as an artist relates to the brush. Not from the shoulder, but with the very tip. And, as a pianist takes the sound from the piano; so you must take the sound from your players. Feel how many sounds there are within each beat."

As for the baton itself, "the first thing is to create an



Getting the point: Ilya Musin, 92, instructs student conductor Ilya Volkov, 19, at the Royal Academy of Music

underlying rhythm for the players, and this is done with the wrist. Many other gestures are used to break that rhythm. But whatever you do with the arm, throw your wrist at the rhythm. Show the last beat in the bar by lowering the wrist and hiding the beat. Now, one, two, three, one, two."

There will sadly be no Shostakovich in the Barbican programme: after suffering three heart attacks, Musin feels "spiritually and emotionally more than eager to conduct Shostakovich — but my

body will not have it". What remains, though, are his memories. Of that first day when they stood on the steps of the St Petersburg Conservatoire together he 16, Shostakovich 13. Of the day when he and a group of friends sat in the apartment of Rimsky-Korsakov's nephew and listened to Shostakovich playing the first two movements of his First Symphony at the piano. Of the day when the two of them sat together at the piano and hammered their way through four-hand transcriptions of all of Wagner's overtures...

Musin has a particularly strong personal view on the still-vexed subject of the Fifth Symphony. Was it an apology to Stalin for previous anti-Soviet works? The *Times* obituary, after all, declared that Shostakovich was a "committed believer in Communism and Soviet power". Was it, as *Testimony*, the famous memoirs related to Solomon Volkov, would have it, rather the voice of Shostakovich as *jurydyky*, or wise fool, revealing the lashes of the whip which cried: "You must rejoice!"

"I have never read Volkov's book. It wasn't available to me. But I feel it is probably closer to the truth than anyone could ever expect. For me, the Fifth Symphony is Shostakovich's only self-portrait. Through the conspiracy of music he showed his true self. As my student Semyon Bychkov once put it, the ending is emphatically not about rejoicing. What it says is: 'Beat me harder! Beat me harder! Beat me harder!' The audience at the premiere wept. They knew well what the work meant."

GREAT BRITISH HOPES

Rising stars in the arts firmament

BELINDA HATLEY

Age: 25
Profession: Soloist with Royal Ballet



How it all began: Started dance lessons in a church hall in Sussex, got into the Royal Ballet School at 13. "I almost didn't get there. Just before my audition I was struck down with appendicitis. Luckily they didn't have to take it out or I would have missed my audition." Joined Covent Garden in 1988.

A bite of the cherry: Last season she got her first Aurora, thanks to the indisposition of the leading ballerinas. "It made me so hungry for more. It gave me a surge of confidence. I want to build on that now. I am desperate for more shows. Still waiting for the chance to do another full-length role. In the meantime, she is busy starring in Matthew Hart's new ballet, *Dances with Death*, in which she plays a woman fighting the Aids virus.

But she cannot fight the hierarchy of a large ballet company: "It is difficult not being able to choose your own roles. It gives you a dreadful sense of paranoia and self-doubt; it's constantly like auditioning. The hopes and then the disappointments when the cast sheet goes up."

There is a lot of competition: "When I stand behind Sylvie Guillem in class, I think to myself, 'Why did I ever start?' But you can't compare yourself to someone else; that's the beginning of the end."

More than a passing resemblance to Ian Botham? "I think I am a good all-rounder. I don't shine in any one area but I can lend myself to very classical work or Balanchine or Ashton." Add humility to her list of virtues: she's a really lovely dancer with true musical heart.

The worst part of the job: "The long hours, especially on those days when I am in at 8am to put on my make-up, then spend all day in class and rehearsal. Then having to get ready for a performance, then the performance, and the curtain comes down at 10.30pm. I had a day like that yesterday."

What happens in 1997 when Covent Garden closes? "I think we're all worried about the future. We'll probably be touring a lot, but what people are concerned about is how much repertoire we will be able to sustain on the road. They see a long line of *Swan Lakes* and *Sleeping Beauties* looming. But the Opera House needs to be redeveloped. There are holes on the stage — very dangerous in our pointe shoes — and when it rains during a performance, you have to dance around the puddles."

DEBRA CRAINE

THE SUNDAY TIMES

FASHION PREVIEW

VERSACE'S LATEST COLLECTION REVEALED

Tomorrow
The Sunday Times Magazine unveils Gianni Versace's sensational collection for spring/summer '96, featuring the world's newest supermodel Amber Valetta exclusively photographed by Richard Avedon

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COURT CIRCULAR

ST JAMES'S PALACE February 9: The Prince of Wales left Royal Air Force Lyneham this morning to visit Croatia and Bosnia...

The Duke of Edinburgh, Permanent Master, the Worshipful Company of Shipwrights, was represented by Mr Ole Kvernedal...

Mr and Mrs Derek Kimber The Duke of Edinburgh, as Permanent Master of the Shipwrights' Company...

Memorial service

Mr and Mrs Derek Kimber The Duke of Edinburgh, as Permanent Master of the Shipwrights' Company...



The Prince of Wales standing yesterday in the ruins of Sarajevo's National Library, once a grand building in a mixture of Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman styles...

Forthcoming marriages

Major J.S. Charnock and Miss D.A. Wallen The engagement is announced between Major John Charnock, Royal Corps of Signals...

Anniversaries

TODAY BIRTHS: Charles Lamb, essayist, London, 1775; Samuel Pillsbury, inventor of the Pillsbury line for ships...

Deaths

KEVIN - Christine Leahy, born at Umalindi, Natal, South Africa, on December 2, 1926...

Deaths

NEALS-GARDNER - On the 8th February, at 89 years, Grace Gardner, nee Neals...

Deaths

NEALS - Peacefully at 93 years, John Neals, of 40 North Street, Glasgow, on 7th February...

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Royal engagements

TOMORROW: Prince Edward, as patron, will attend a ball to mark the 40th anniversary of the National Youth Theatre...

Events

TODAY: The Queen's Life Guard mounts at Horse Guards at 11.00. The Queen's Guard mounts at Buckingham Palace at 11.30.

Weekend birthdays

TODAY: Mr Larry Adler, mouth organist, 82; Mr Michael Afton, film director, 55; Field Marshal Sir Nigel Bagnall, 69; Sir Michael Bishop, chairman, British Midland Airways, 54...

Church services tomorrow

ABERDEEN CATHEDRAL 8 HC 10.15 Eucharist, Canon B. Johnson... BIRMINGHAM CATHEDRAL 9.15 AM Holy Communion, Canon C. J. Gifford... BUCKINGHAM PALACE 10.15 AM Holy Communion, Canon C. J. Gifford...

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PERSONAL COLUMN

TRADE: 0171 481 1982 FAX: 0171 481 9313

Grid of personal notices including Births, Deaths, Memoriams, Tickets for Sale, and Announcements.

NEWS

Bomb ends IRA ceasefire
The IRA ceasefire appeared to be in tatters last night after a huge bomb exploded on London's Isle of Dogs as thousands of office workers were making their way home.

Hospitals had to treat more than a hundred casualties, a handful of them seriously hurt, after the blast at the South Quay Docklands Light Railway station close to the Canary Wharf office block. Page 1

Hunt for rapist moves to London
A nationwide hunt for the convicted rapist Victor Farrant - wanted for the murder of his girlfriend, and attempting to kill another woman - switched to London after police found his car dumped in Plaistow, east London. Page 1

Clubhouse doors open Winter refuge
The National Lottery is succeeding where generations of feminists have failed in getting Britain's golf clubs to give equal rights to women members. Page 1

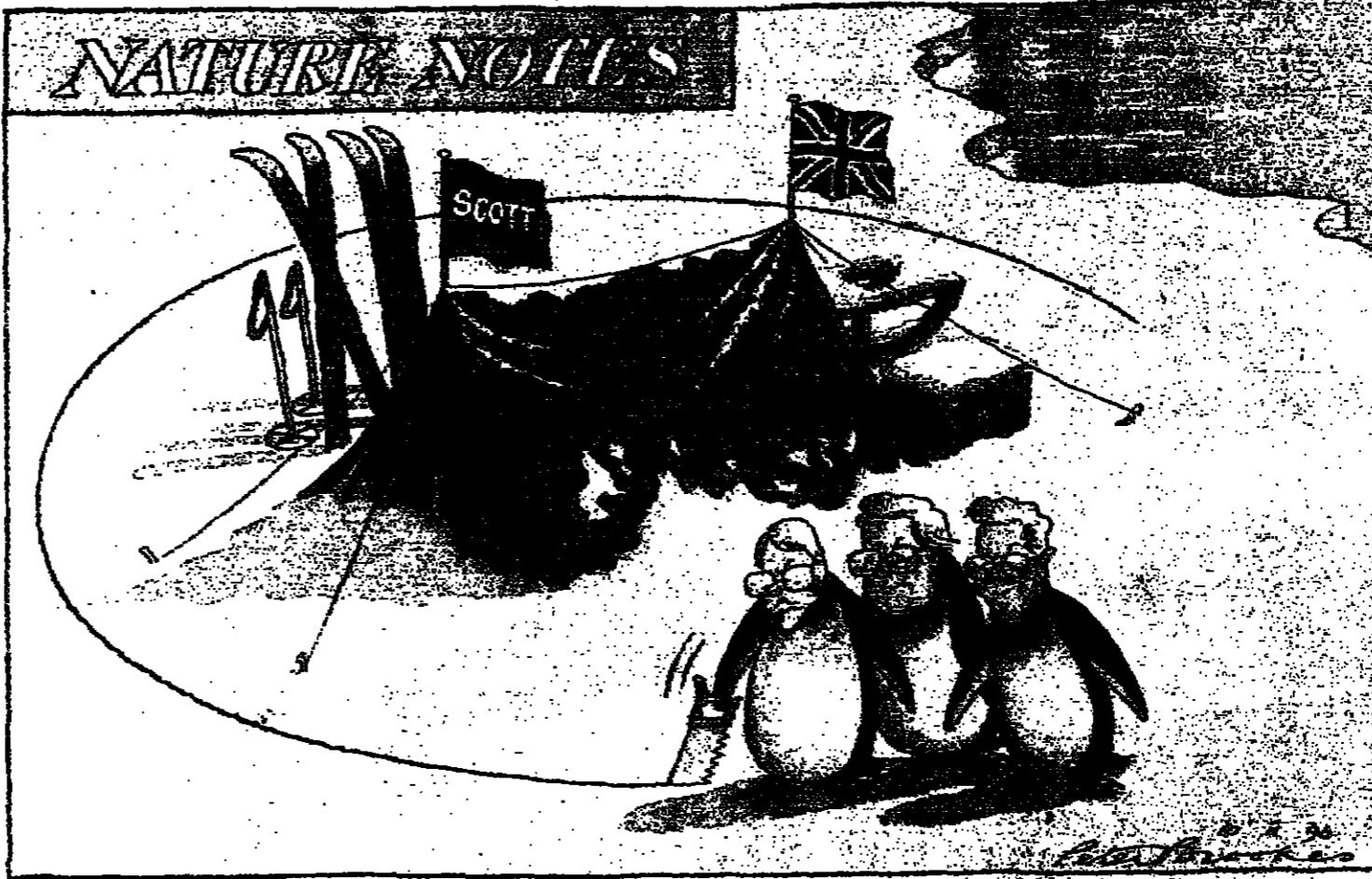
Brocket jailed
Lord Brocket is today beginning a five-year prison term after admitting a £4.5 million insurance fraud. Pages 1, 3

Hindley rejection
Michael Howard is set to reject a parole board recommendation that Myra Hindley be moved to an open prison. Page 2

Teenager freed
The youngest female murder convict in Scotland was freed after judges said she was a victim of a miscarriage of justice. Page 5

Rail buyer sought
John Major tried to limit the damage caused by rail privatisation as a buyer for the Southend "misery line" was sought. Page 7

Women driven wild by car adverts
Advertising campaigns for cars are stuck in a 1950s time warp that patronises women, according to a survey. Renault's commercial for the Clio, featuring Papa and Nicole, was singled out for particular criticism. Page 5



OPINION

Shrouded in myths: There is a case to be made for closer European co-operation. Its merits are obscured by the myth-makers. Page 21

Latin Pope: Only by returning to its true pastoral business can the Roman Catholic Church face its brightly new competitors in Latin America. Page 21

LETTERS

Scottish devolution: honouring firefighter heroes; Cézanne, and other artistic matters; Le Fenice; curriculum tests. Page 21

COLUMNS

Simon Jenkins: The Tate's Cézanne show is a sensation. The hyperbole starts with attendance figures and goes on to money. Page 20

Lord Irvine: Devolution is a sound policy for the decentralisation of government within the United Kingdom. Page 20

OBITUARIES

Major-General "Bill" Liarlet, Deputy Master General of Ordnance 1961-64; Sir Thomas Padmore, Transport Ministry Permanent Secretary, 1962-68; Antonio, flamenco dancer. Page 23

BUSINESS

Housing gloom: Trading statements released by Tarmac and Wimpey, the construction firms, underlined the continued recession in housebuilding. Page 25

Gas rivals: More than 60,000 families in the South West will drop British Gas to buy fuel from competing suppliers when a pilot project starts in the spring. Page 25

Markets: The FT-SE 100 rose 7.9 to 3,716.3. The pound fell 0.4 cents to \$1.5326 and 0.3 pennings to DM2.2656, with the sterling index closing 84.1, down 0.2. Page 25

FOOTBALL

Manchester United signed a kit sponsorship and merchandising deal with Umbro worth £60 million over six years, a record for British sport. Page 17

Rugby union: Rob Andrew, the former England stand-off half, is ruled out of the national team - at least until next season. Page 18

Cricket: The chances of the deadlock being broken over the refusal of Australia and West Indies to play World Cup matches in Colombo appear to have improved. Page 18

WEEKEND

Rattle on: In Birmingham, Sir Simon Rattle gave classical music a new civic purpose, says Richard Morrison. Now he must continue in the international arena. Page 17

Never too young: Ilya Musin, the 92-year-old conductor, is to make his London debut this week. Page 19

One for the road: Tony Dodgins discovers what it is really like to drive a Formula One machine. Page 19

SECTIONS MAGAZINE

Joanna Pitman meets Jose Carreras... Page 8
Idol pursuits: Women who go to Greece for a real man... Page 16

WEEKEND

Joan Collins: Publishing profits... Page 1



Royal bowers by Sylvia Landsberg... Page 5
Passion for Paris: Romantic hotels... Pages 18-19

10 15

Fashion: Is 12 too young to be a supermodel?... Page 6
Win: Mitsubishi hi-fi, Valentine videos... Page 3



Cover story: Channel 4 starts its coverage of American basketball. Film of the week: Woody Allen's Radio Days.

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,087

Aberlour A limited edition, 1970 vintage bottle of Aberlour single malt whisky, the only malt whisky to have twice won the prestigious Gold Medal and Pot Still Trophy at the International Wine & Spirit Competition...

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down.

- ACROSS
1 Kim gives John a lot of money (7).
5 He follows suit with leads of clubs - one player you can always trust (7).
9 Row across British river (5).
10 Refuse to admit chessplayer to dance (9).
11 Leaving without us after party's over (6).
12 Cause distress and rage, give hurt (8).
14 Port most suitable when around river (5).
15 In ordinary language, charming conduct (9).
18 The duck is excellent, I say (6-3).
20 Youngster in charge of sound (5).
22 Golf course providing something to eat between rounds (8).
24 Essential part fulfilled by sailors in vessel (6).
26 Take out bird among aristocracy (9).
27 Suddenly emerge from cover up there (5).
28 Make detour, locating work unit back in Norfolk town (7).
29 Boat designed for smaller loads (7).

Solution to Puzzle No 20,087 and Puzzle No 20,086.

TIMES WEATHERCALL

Table with weather forecasts for various regions like London, Kent, Devon, etc.

AA ROADWATCH

Table with road traffic information for various routes.

HOURS OF DARKNESS

Table with sunrise and sunset times for various locations.

HIGH TIDES

Table with high tide times for various locations.

HIGHEST & LOWEST

Table with highest and lowest temperature records.

FORECAST

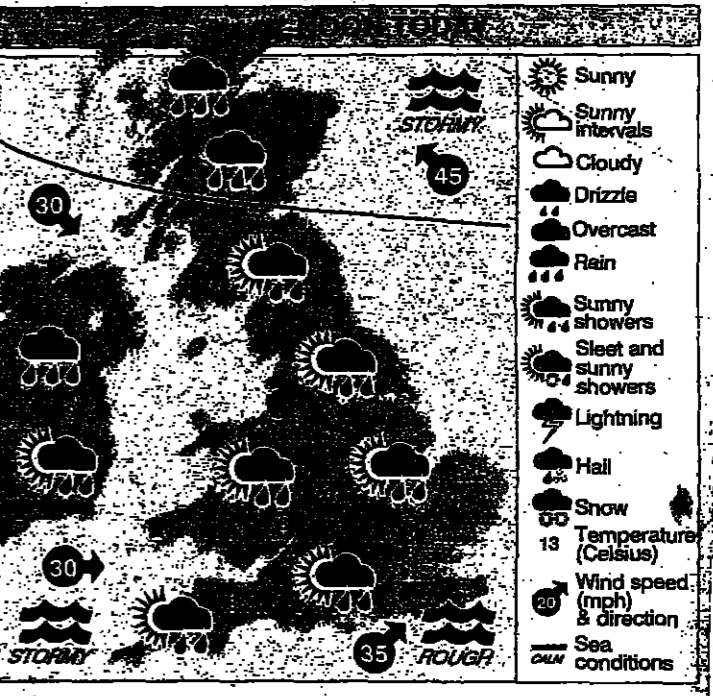
General: England and Wales will have a rather cloudy day. It will be windy with fresh, blustery southwest winds which will bring frequent showers, heavy in places. Southeastern areas should have spells of sunshine later and by evening the showers will be confined to western coasts. Temperatures will be slightly higher than Friday.

AROUND BRITAIN YESTERDAY

Table with weather data for various locations like Aberdeen, London, Manchester, etc.

AEROD

Table with flight information for various airlines.



TORONTO WITH NIAGARA

BA 747 from Heathrow to Toronto on 23 May, 11 Aug, 30 Aug or 14 Sep. Five nights at the deluxe Sheraton city tour, harbour cruise, Niagara with helicopter, Phantom of the Opera, Concorde supersonic to Heathrow £1,999 or £2,999 with O.E. and QE2 cruise to New York.

MONACO GRAND PRIX

Eurostar or fly to Paris on 18 May city tour overnight at Nikko Hotel, Concorde supersonic to Nice, reserved seat for Monaco Grand Prix, return to Gatwick £1,299.

QE2 AND ORIENT-EXPRESS

Concorde supersonic to Tenerife on 17 April, five night QE2 cruise to Southampton via Las Palmas and Madeira, Orient-Express to Victoria £1,499.

BRUNO v. TYSON

Fly from Gatwick or Luton for seven nights to Las Vegas on 11 March, or from Heathrow or Gatwick for three nights on 15 March, first class hotel £599, reserved seat £400 or £900 Ringside.

WORLD CUP SQUADS: ONE-DAY INTERNATIONAL FACTS AND FIGURES

ENGLAND

Table with columns: M, I, NO, Runs, HS, Ave, 100, 50, C, S, I. Lists players like M.A. Atherton, D.G. Cork, P.A.J. DeFreitas, N.H. Fairbrother, D. Gough, G.A. Hick, R.K. Illingworth, P.J. Martin, R.C. Russell, N.M.K. Smith, R.A. Smith, A.J. Stewart, G.R. Thompson, C. White.

Bowling table for England with columns: O, M, R, W, Ave, Best, Sw, Econ. Lists players like D.G. Cork, P.A.J. DeFreitas, N.H. Fairbrother, D. Gough, G.A. Hick, R.K. Illingworth, P.J. Martin, R.C. Russell, N.M.K. Smith, R.A. Smith, A.J. Stewart, G.R. Thompson, C. White.

INDIA

Table with columns: M, I, NO, Runs, HS, Ave, 100, 50, C, S, I. Lists players like M.Ahmedullah, S.A. Anis, A.D. Jadeja, V.G. Kamble, A.R. Kapoor, A. Kumble, S.V. Manjrikar, M. Prasad, S.L.V. Raju, N.S. Sidhu, S.R. Tendulkar.

PAKISTAN

Table with columns: O, M, R, W, Ave, Best, Sw, Econ. Lists players like M.Azharuddin, S.A. Anis, A.D. Jadeja, V.G. Kamble, A.R. Kapoor, A. Kumble, S.V. Manjrikar, M. Prasad, S.L.V. Raju, N.S. Sidhu, S.R. Tendulkar.

Bowling table for Pakistan with columns: O, M, R, W, Ave, Best, Sw, Econ. Lists players like Wasim Akram, Aamir Sohail, Aftab-Ilyas, Ahsan-Ul-Rahman, Inzamam-ul-Haq, Javed Miandad, Ramiz Raja, Saqlain Mushtaq, Waqar Younis.

WEST INDIES

Table with columns: O, M, R, W, Ave, Best, Sw, Econ. Lists players like W.A. Marsh, M.S. Adair, M.A. Atherton, D.G. Cork, P.A.J. DeFreitas, N.H. Fairbrother, D. Gough, G.A. Hick, R.K. Illingworth, P.J. Martin, R.C. Russell, N.M.K. Smith, R.A. Smith, A.J. Stewart, G.R. Thompson, C. White.

AUSTRALIA

Table with columns: M, I, NO, Runs, HS, Ave, 100, 50, C, S, I. Lists players like M.A. Taylor, M.G. Bevan, D.W. Fleming, I.A. Healy, S.G. Law, S.Lee, G.D. McGrath, R.T. Ponting, P.R. Rees, M.J. Slater, S.K. Warne, M.E. Waugh, S.R. Waugh.

Bowling table for Australia with columns: O, M, R, W, Ave, Best, Sw, Econ. Lists players like M.G. Bevan, D.W. Fleming, S.G. Law, C.J. McDermott, P.R. Rees, M.J. Slater, S.K. Warne, M.E. Waugh, S.R. Waugh.

NEW ZEALAND

Table with columns: O, M, R, W, Ave, Best, Sw, Econ. Lists players like L.K. Greven, N.J. Astle, S.L. Coles, S.P. Fleming, C.Z. Harris, D.K. Morrison, D.J. Nash, A.C. Peterson, N.J. Pottinger, C.M. Spence, S.A. Thomson, R.G. Twose.

NEW ZEALAND

Table with columns: O, M, R, W, Ave, Best, Sw, Econ. Lists players like N.J. Astle, C.L. Cairns, S.P. Fleming, C.Z. Harris, R.J. Kennedy, D.R. Latham, D.J. Nash, D.N. Patel, A.C. Thomson, R.G. Twose.

Bowling table for New Zealand with columns: O, M, R, W, Ave, Best, Sw, Econ. Lists players like W.J. Courie, P.R. Adams, D.J. Cullinan, P.S. de Villiers, A.A. Donald, A.C. Hudson, G. Hume, H. Kapell, G. Latham, C.R. Matthews, B. McCullum, S.J. Pollard, S.M. Pollard, P.L. Symcox.

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Advertisement for Sky Sports featuring 'free installation guaranteed for the Cricket World Cup when you buy before 5.30pm today' and '1/2 price installation'.

Advertisement for World Cup Cricket on Sky TV, showing 'World Cup Cricket exclusively live Feb 14 - March 17' and 'England v New Zealand February 14th'.

Table with columns: M, I, NO, Runs, HS, Ave, 100, 50, C, S, I. Lists players like A. Renninga, M.S. Atapattu, U.U. Chandana, P.A. de Silva, H.P.K. Dharmasena, A.P. Gunathilaka, S.T. Jayasinghe, R.S. Madhevananda, R. Mahananda, M. Mendis, K.R. Purushothaman, P.P. Thambipillai, W.P.U.C.J. Vijay, G.P. Wickramasinghe.

Bowling table for Sri Lanka with columns: O, M, R, W, Ave, Best, Sw, Econ. Lists players like A. Ranasinghe, M.S. Atapattu, U.U. Chandana, P.A. de Silva, H.P.K. Dharmasena, A.P. Gunathilaka, S.T. Jayasinghe, R.S. Madhevananda, R. Mahananda, M. Mendis, K.R. Purushothaman, P.P. Thambipillai, W.P.U.C.J. Vijay, G.P. Wickramasinghe.

WEST INDIES

Table with columns: M, I, NO, Runs, HS, Ave, 100, 50, C, S, I. Lists players like R.B. Richardson, J.C. Adams, C.E.L. Ambrose, K.L. Anderson, R.R. Bishop, C.O. Browne, S.L. Campbell, S. Chandernagor, C.E. Coles, D.D. Gibson, R.A. Harper, R.I.C. Holder, B.C. Lara, C.A. Walsh.

Bowling table for West Indies with columns: O, M, R, W, Ave, Best, Sw, Econ. Lists players like R.B. Richardson, J.C. Adams, C.E.L. Ambrose, K.L. Anderson, R.R. Bishop, S. Chandernagor, C.E. Coles, D.D. Gibson, R.A. Harper, R.I.C. Holder, B.C. Lara, C.A. Walsh.

WEST INDIES

Table with columns: M, I, NO, Runs, HS, Ave, 100, 50, C, S, I. Lists players like A. Flower, A.D. Hogg, G.W. Flower, H.R. Clarke, S.G. Grant, P.A. Strang, A.C. Walker, G.J. White.

Bowling table for West Indies with columns: O, M, R, W, Ave, Best, Sw, Econ. Lists players like A. Flower, A.D. Hogg, G.W. Flower, H.R. Clarke, S.G. Grant, P.A. Strang, A.C. Walker, G.J. White.

WEST INDIES

Table with columns: M, I, NO, Runs, HS, Ave, 100, 50, C, S, I. Lists players like S. Zane, A. Langer, J. Langer, M. Langer, N. Langer, O. Langer, P. Langer, Q. Langer, R. Langer, S. Langer, T. Langer, U. Langer, V. Langer, W. Langer, X. Langer, Y. Langer, Z. Langer.

Bowling table for West Indies with columns: O, M, R, W, Ave, Best, Sw, Econ. Lists players like S. Zane, A. Langer, J. Langer, M. Langer, N. Langer, O. Langer, P. Langer, Q. Langer, R. Langer, S. Langer, T. Langer, U. Langer, V. Langer, W. Langer, X. Langer, Y. Langer, Z. Langer.

ہفت روزہ

SKY sports

THE TIMES

CRICKET WORLD CUP

SKY sports



Who will follow Clive Lloyd, left, who led West Indies to victory in 1975 and 1979, Kapil Dev, of India, victorious in 1983, Allan Border, who captained Australia in 1987, and Imran Khan, Pakistan's unifying force four years ago?

Riches in store after the ridicule

THE sixth cricket World Cup has attracted ridicule and condemnation in its run-up but it is on the delivery that it must be judged. Out of a jungle of political tension, logistical chaos and administrative brinkmanship, there just might emerge a memorable sporting competition, one that does justice to the largest gathering of leading cricketing countries in the game's history.

Given what has already occurred, a complete shambles seems the likelier outcome, but to denounce in advance is to forget that the nations staging the tournament live, by nature, on the edge. Their organisation of sporting events habitually bewilders by producing what, at the eleventh hour, had seemed impossible. They may astound everyone by doing so again.

No one should underestimate what is at stake for India and Pakistan. With revenue from the event likely to reach £40 million, the joint hosts share all profits after the prize-money (£200,000) and statutory guarantees to competing nations have been met. Sri Lanka, who did not commit any money at the bidding stage, are not entitled to any of the profits, making them, with the developments of the past week, losers all round.

There is political capital to be made out of successfully staging such a competition, too, and the wonder of it is that this can be shared equally by two nations who, off the cricket field, are seldom far from a state of war with each other. The possibility of them being drawn together at the knockout stage of the cup is not altogether an

attractive one. It was as recently as 1987 that India and Pakistan last combined as the venue for the World Cup and, despite a background of tension relating to the South African ties of some England players, it passed off smoothly.

The present event, which starts on Wednesday, is more ambitious, involving 12 teams rather than the eight who took part in 1987 and nine in 1992. The method of accommodating the extra sides is dubious, giving the impression that the three weeks of qualifying games are largely irrelevant to the knockout rounds which follow. It is the introduction of a quarter-final round that is crucial, for it means that only one Test-playing country, in all probability Zimbabwe, need



Alan Lee, cricket correspondent, hopes for the best from a tournament that has been plagued by political tension and administrative chaos before a ball has been bowled

be eliminated after 30 group games. This ludicrously long-winded process suffers by comparison with the method used in Australia four years ago, when all the teams played each other in a round-robin format, the top four proceeding to the semi-finals. It was thought that this would take an impracticable time with 12 sides, though India's insistence on staging all 17 of its group games on different grounds, thus adding to the travelling complexities, has hardly helped.

The comfort zone produced by the new rules contributed to the stance adopted by Australia and West Indies over playing in Sri Lanka. Safety concerns notwithstanding, they knew they could still qualify for the last eight after conceding a match, as long as they both beat Zimbabwe and Kenya and pick up one other victory each. England, theoretically, are in an easier group, as it includes Holland and the United Arab Emirates. Tempting providence, it is difficult

to envisage even England losing to these ICC associate member nations. But then similar things were said about Zimbabwe in 1992 and England were beaten by them.

Do not dismiss England's prospects of winning the cup. Dismiss, instead, the evidence of their wretched one-day performances at the far-end of their South African tour when, by the admission even of those involved, their eye had strayed from the ball. They are a better limited-overs side than that

and, in Graeme Hick, Dominic Cork and, one hopes, a resurgent Darren Gough, they could have some of the key players of the tournament.

Australia's status as favourites has been eroded, not by their playing form, which continues to be imperious, but by their evident mental frailty over the security issue. While they are the best team in the world, they can be beaten in these circumstances.

West Indies, who won the first two World Cups and, to general astonishment, lost in the final of the third, have not reached the last four in either of the two most recent tournaments and it will be a mild surprise if they do so here. If Brian Lara is mentally attuned, they can

chase any target, of course, but their bowling attack is not ideally designed for limited-overs cricket and their batting, without Carl Hooper, is fragile.

New Zealand were the revelation of the 1992 event, moulding an inventive game-plan to predictably slow home pitches. They will try similar tactics here but the inspiration of Martin Crowe will be missed. South Africa have a better chance, for their fielding will be outstanding, their batting durable and their fast bowling probably peerless. Of the visiting nations, I make them favourites.

Of the three hosts, Sri Lanka have turned in some good recent results but will not, ultimately, have the necessary depth, while Pakistan, the holders, are capable of great heights and dismal depths on consecutive days, but will suffer for poor fielding and perhaps the pressures of home support. They have not found harmony as a team since the departure of Imran Khan and it is hard to see how the latest return of Javed Miandad can help.

India, who will use three spin bowlers and boast the most attractive batting of any side, are my idea of the likeliest winners. They have a settled captain in Mohammad Azharuddin, a batting prince in Sachin Tendulkar and a match-winning leg-spin bowler in Anil Kumble. They have come a long way since their ineptitude in the inaugural World Cup match, 21 years ago, when they were so overawed by England's total of 334 that they batted as if playing for a draw. The coming five weeks will show just how far.

Rain rule might not prevent another farce

By SIMON WILDE

IF THE organisers of the World Cup think their embarrassment will end with the dispute over Sri Lankan venues, they may be sadly mistaken. Let it rain, and then Filcom might wish the tournament had gone to England after all.

Rain is the bane of the one-day game. It means revised targets, claims of unfair treatment and misery all round, as the Australians know only too well after their "rain rule" was held up to ridicule during the last World Cup.

Then, the England-South Africa semi-final in Sydney descended into farce when rain stopped play for 12 minutes with South Africa needing 22 runs from 13 balls. That had promised to be a fair contest but the rules dictated that, on the resumption, the

target was an impossible 21 runs from one ball and England were handed a tame, and unsatisfactory, victory. The greatest nonsense, of course, was that there was no need to recalculate at all: if conditions permitted one ball more, why not 13?

That system has been abandoned but is the new one — based on a method devised by a South African schoolboy — devoid of potential embarrassment? Unfortunately not. It appears logical enough, drawing on a detailed mathematical analysis of one-day matches to attempt to establish what constitutes a revised target fair to both sides in any given situation, should rain intervene.

For example, Team A scores 250 in its 50 overs and Team B's reply is shortened by rain. If it is reduced to 25 overs, reference to the Target Score Calculation Chart issued to

all teams shows that they must score 66.7 per cent of Team A's total to win, which would mean a target of 167.

If Team B is limited to 30 overs, the chart says they must score 76 per cent of the original target (or 190 runs); if 40 overs, 90.7 per cent (227 runs). To constitute a match, the team batting second must receive at least 25 overs; if that cannot be done on the first day, a new match can be started on a second, reserve day.

So what would the loss of 12 balls have meant to South Africa at Sydney in 1992 under the new rule? Their target would have been reduced by 1.8 per cent, or four runs fewer than the 252 runs England scored, which sounds reasonable enough had South Africa known that from the start of their innings but, with the rain coming late, they would have still required 17 runs from that

final ball. The occasion would still have been a farce.

"This new method works distinctly against the team batting second when the overs are lost part of the way through their innings," Tony Lewis, a university mathematics lecturer who discussed an alternative system with the International Cricket Council (ICC), said. "It is only fair when the lost overs occur at the beginning of the second team's innings. It does not provide a fair target-setting procedure."

The ICC, the game's governing body, which has no direct control over the World Cup this year, has asked Lewis to present his system — which takes into account the stage of the innings that overs are lost and the number of wickets that have fallen — to its annual meeting this summer. But it might be too late to save Filcom's blushes.

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From old stagers to temperamental stars, fallen heroes to wronged men, the cast is strong

Differing types who will hit the headlines



Michael Henderson on the men who are likely to dominate the news during the tournament

The cricket World Cup is an admirable instrument for making fools of us all. Did India not win it in 1983, defending a total of 183 at Lord's against a West Indies team sniffing a third successive triumph? Four years later was it really Australia, then the rubbing-rags of cricket, who finished top? At the last competition, held in Australia and New Zealand, how did Pakistan overcome an appalling start to breast the tape?

They did, and the memory of that transformation must encourage the lesser-fancied teams as they prepare for the sixth World Cup, which begins this week. If Pakistan could sort themselves out, Michael Atherton will be telling his players, so can we. Finalists in 1979, 1987 and again four years ago, when Wasim Akram undid them in Melbourne with a startling exposition of swing bowling.

England — yes, even the bunch who bent the knee to South Africa last month — are capable of winning the trophy.

The odd thing about the World Cup is that it has never been won by the host nation. This time there are three "home" countries, of whom

India appear to have the best chance of success. Pakistan are still trying to regroup after 18 appalling months riven by mud-slinging and internal dissent. As for Sri Lanka, who are slowly emerging as a force in world cricket, their problems have less to do with the actual playing of the game than the political machinations they can hardly avoid.

So who can one expect to make the news in the coming month? The obvious candidates can sometimes be upstaged by the foot-soldiers. In 1992, Dipak Patel, the all-rounder transplanted from the Black Country to New Zealand, opened the bowling with his innocent off-twill and helped his side score a tactical success. Limited-overs cricket dances to a different, more hectic tune than the first-class game and it can pay to bribe the band. Still, there are some lively characters for the headline-hunters to follow.

The old stager: Javed Miandad, Pakistan's senior citizen, at 38, has moved heaven and earth to get himself picked for this competition. Miandad has played in the previous five tournaments but the seriousness of his leg injury means he cannot be fully fit. The old crock wants to go out in a blaze of glory. It is asking a lot.

The temperamental star: in the past six months Brian Lara has become the prince of pouters. The West Indies management has been exceedingly generous to him, given his

truculence and the overt way he seeks to succeed Richie Richardson as captain. For all that, he is a great batsman.

The king of the world: Sachin Tendulkar has the talent and the home comforts to impose himself on the tournament. Although he seems to have been around for ages, India's leading batsman is only 22, four years younger than Lara, and has not yet outgrown his original cap size.

The wronged man: Muttiah Muralitharan, the Sri Lanka off spinner, was humiliated during the recent Test against Australia in Melbourne when Darrell Hair, the home umpire, no-balled him seven times for throwing. His performance will be an important sub-plot as the story unfolds.

The fallen man: much depends on Salim Malik's batting if Pakistan are to translate their raw talent into achievement. Salim will always be associated in people's minds

with the great bribery row that surfaced last year when Shane Warne and Mark Waugh alleged he had tried to buy them off. Like Javed, his time is almost up.

The stars-in-waiting: Shaun Pollock impressed mightily for South Africa during the recent Test series victory over England, bowling fast with the new ball and making valuable runs down the order. He is already an important member of a strong team. Likewise, Dominic Cork has secured his place in England's side and, provided his knees stand up, he should excel.

The stricken captain: Richie Richardson's meter has not got many more miles to clock. The West Indies captain leads a rocky ship and the crew's loyalty is not certain. A decent man, Richardson has presided over the decline of a team that appears increasingly fallible.

The best bowler: Shane Warne, the wrist spinner who is the brightest star in cricket's firmament, ahead of Tendulkar and Lara, gives Australia a matchless advantage. Yet he may be the focus of unwelcome attention in Pakistan after the Salim allegations. Another wrist spinner, Anil Kumble, of India, should do well in conditions he knows. Among the faster bowlers, Allan Donald, of South Africa, and (if he is not too busy sulking) Curtly Ambrose, of West Indies, should get most out of the slow pitches.

The fastest-century maker: given Michael Slater's natural aggression and the rules that forbid more than two men beyond the circle for the first 15 overs of an innings, the Australian opener will not lack opportunity. Along with Tendulkar, he could be the chief pleasure-giver of the tournament.



Muralitharan's action will again be scrutinised after the recent chucking controversy in Australia



Tendulkar, a king among batsmen



Salim: cleared but running out of time



Lara: brilliance matched by truculence



The appeal of Warne, left, should not be diminished by the limited-overs context. Pollock emerged triumphant in the Test series against England



Shock treatments that add refinement to one-day game

By SIMON WILDE

IT IS all too easy for teams to allow one-day cricket to become too complicated. Talk of pinch-hitters, opening the bowling with spinners, and holding back strike bowlers can distract from the game's essentials. If you bat, bowl and field better than the opposition you will almost always come out on top.

That does not mean that there is not a considerable advantage to be gained by resorting to the unexpected, as New Zealand amply demonstrated during the last World Cup, in Australasia four years ago, when they flummoxed several opening batsmen

by giving the new ball to Dipak Patel, an off spinner.

The role of the slow bowler may be different this time. On the hard, dusty pitches and outfield of the sub-continent, the ball will wear rapidly and they may be required to take it in the later stages of an innings, when it has nothing to offer most fast-medium bowlers.

Spin will undoubtedly play a key role in the competition. India and Sri Lanka, two of the three best teams, will rely more on slow bowling than any other sort, although a danger for all sides in the group matches is that many grounds have short boundaries, exposing those who flight the ball to

possibly unacceptable risks. Apart from anything else, the new ball might be put to better use. It is generally recognised that, when new, the white ball — which will be used in all matches — swings more than the traditional red one and this might be the time to use a medium-pace bowler who can control the ball.

Some bowlers, of course, can do too much. Dominic Cork, a natural swinger of the ball, is one, and England might be wise to hold him back until later in the innings. This is one reason why South Africa do not give the new ball to Allan Donald, quite apart from the fact that he is destructive enough to badly disrupt the middle period of a 50-

overs innings. The ball is also unlikely to deviate much off the seam. To escape heavy punishment, the fast-medium bowlers will need to move the ball in the air with control and vary their pace — bowlers of the type of Wasim Akram and Waqar Younis, of Pakistan, Srinath, of India, McMillan, of South Africa, and Gough, of England.

When the World Cup was held last on the sub-continent, in 1987, sides batting first appeared to hold an advantage. Their opponents wilted under the heat and pressure and failed to reach their targets 19 times in 27 matches. This time, though, the climate will not be so hostile, as the competition is being

played in the region's spring, not its late summer.

A key battleground will be the first 15 overs of an innings, when all but two of the fielding side must be within the "ring". During the last World Cup, when this rule was also in force, some teams used specialist batsmen to hit over the top — Botham for England, Greatbatch for New Zealand.

The trend continues. By sometimes using Lara and Tendulkar as openers, West Indies and India have risked their best players in search of good starts. More recently, other sides have started to gamble with more "expedient" batsmen. It will be interesting to see which strategy works best.

Television channels plugging into new territory

By Ivo TENNANT

THE sixth World Cup is to be covered more extensively on television and radio than any in the past. A cargo plane, will ferry 40 tonnes of equipment and innumerable technicians around the sub-continent to enable Sky to show more than 200 hours of live cricket.

The BBC has reached an agreement with Sky to televise highlights and Today, the current affairs radio programme, will, on certain days, make way for ball-by-ball coverage.

Over the 33 days of competition, Sky Sports will show 29 matches in full plus highlights every evening. The 25 commentators will include Richie Benaud, Geoffrey Boycott — returning to the team after moving to radio for the England tour of South Africa — Tony Greig and Tony Lewis. Charles Colville, the presenter, will be based in the studio at Isleworth, interviewing the likes of Angus Fraser and Dermot Reeve.

At each match Sky will use nine cameras, four slow-motion replay machines, one stump camera, one stump microphone and no fewer than 35 technicians.

Those matches restricted to highlights are on days when there are other live fixtures deemed to be more significant.

BBC Television is to



show highlights on ten evenings, starting with England's opening fixture against New Zealand on February 14, which will be on Sportsnight. All of England's matches, plus both semi-finals and the final, are to be covered on either Radio 4 long wave or Radio 5 Live. Jonathan Agnew, Peter Baxter and Mike Selvey form the core of the commentary team. John Barclay, the England assistant manager, might also be employed as a summariser.

"I aim to have a report on every match and have the rights to do the quarter-finals even if England do not qualify," Baxter, the producer, said. "Expectations of quality go up all the time but I can't afford an engineer — I'm doing that myself. I don't think I've done anything on such shaly ground before, yet we are aiming for a great deal of ball-by-ball coverage."

Of England's five qualifying matches, the three that take place on Sundays are to be broadcast on Radio 5 Live and the two on weekdays — their opening fixture and that against Holland on February 22 — on Radio 4 long wave.

Meanwhile, spare a thought for the commentators, who have to continue at their post without concern about bombs going off around them. Fortunately for Sky and BBC viewers, three of the hardest cricketers to have played the game have been assigned. To Colombo, Benaud, Greig and the most daunting of all, Ian Chappell.

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35 technicians, 5 commentators,
1 stump cam and 1 stump mike
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